al-Mīzān





An Exegesis of the Qur'ãn

BY:

al-`Allãmah as-Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī

VOLUME 1

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WOFIS

World Organization for Islamic Services

English translation **First edition** 1983/1403

Translated from the Arabic

al-Mīzãn fi tafsīri '1-Qur'ãn
Beirut, 1393/1973 (3rd ed.)

Published by:

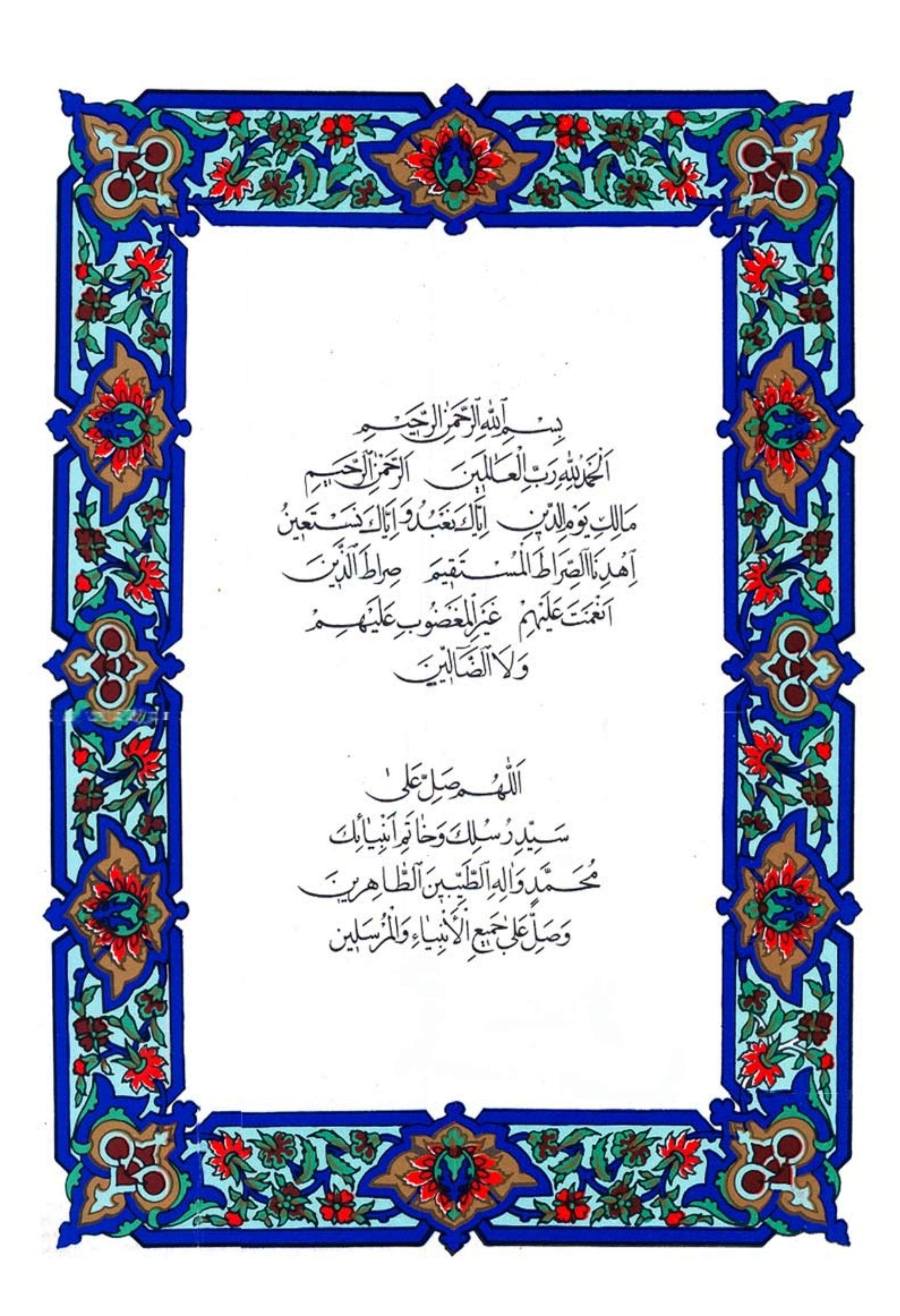
World Organization for Islamic Services,
P. O. Box No. 11365-1545,
Tehran — IRAN.
Printed by Offset Press Inc. Tehran Iran

In the Name of Allãh,
The All-compassionate, The All-merciful

Praise belongs to Allãh, the Lord of all being;
the All-compassionate, the All-merciful;
the Master of the Day of Judgement;
Thee only we serve, and to Thee alone we pray
for succour;
Guide us in the straight path;
the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,
not of those against whom Thou art wrathful,
nor of those who are astray.

* * * * *

O ' Allãh! send your blessings to the head of
your messengers and the last of
your prophets,
Muhammad and his pure and cleansed progeny.
Also send your blessings to all your
prophets and envoys.


بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ
اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ
أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ
اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلىٰ
سَيِّدِ رُسُلِكَ وَخَاتَمِ أَنْبِيَائِكَ
مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ
وَصَلِّ عَلىٰ جَمِيعِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ

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العلاّمة السّيّد محمّد حسين الطباطبائيّ

(۱۳۲۱/۱۹۰٤ — ۱٤۰۲/۱۹۸۱)

العلاّمة الشهير والمفكّر والفيلسوف الاسلاميّ المعاصر السّيّد محمّد حسين بن السّيّد محمّد بن السّيّد محمّد حسين الطّباطبائيّ رحمه‌الله رحمة واسعة ينتمي الى الأسرة الطّباطبائيّة في تبريز – ايران، الّتي هي من الأسر العلميّة الشّهيرة في آذربايجان الايرانيّة طيلة القرون الثّلاثة الأخيرة، و هي حسنيّة ترجع بنسبها الشّريف الى الإمام الحسن بن علي عليهما السّلام، و يلقّب أفرادها أيضا بلقب (القاضي).

ولد العلاّمة الطّباطبائيّ في تبريز في ۱۳۲۱/۱۲/۳۰=۱۹۰٤/۳/۱۷، و أحسّ باليتيم منذ أن كان صغيرا فقد توفّي والده العلاّمة سنة ۱۳۳۰/۱۹۱۲، فنشأ و درس المبادئ الأوّليّة والمراحل الأولى للعلوم الدّينيّة و غيرها مما كان ضمن مناهج التّعليم يومذاك في تبريز، و هاجر الى النّجف الأشرف – العراق، أهمّ مركز علميّ للشّيعة الإماميّة حدود ۱۳٤۱/۱۹۲۳، وتلقّى فيها دروسه العاليّة في العلوم الإسلاميّة على الشّيخ (الميرزا) محمد حسين بن (شيخ الإسلام الميرزا) عبدالرّحيم النّائينيّ الغرويّ (۱۲۷۷/۱۸٦۰ – ۱۳٥٥/۱۹۳٦) والشّيخ محمّد حسين بن الحاج محمّد حسن (معين التّجار) الاصفهانيّ (۱۲۹٦/۱۸۷۸ – ۱۳٦۱/۱۹٤۲) الّذين هما و ثالث ثلاثتهما الشّيخ ضياء الدّين بن (المولى) محمّد العراقيّ – (۱۲۷۸/۱۸٦۱ – ۱۸٦۲ – ۱۳٦۱/۱۹٤۲) يعدّون من أشهر رجال العلم و ذوي

الرّأي والنّظر في علوم الفقه الإماميّ وأصوله، بل في عامّة العلوم الاسلاميّة في العصر الحاضر والذين أبدعوا كثيرا من النّظريّات والآراء العلميّة المأخوذ بها من قبل من جاء بعدهم، والذين كوّن كلّ واحد منهم مدرسة خاصّة امتازت بخصائصها و طلاّبها، وقد تخرّج عليهم عامّة علماء الإماميّة وفقهائها، ومنهم مراجع التّقليد للشّيعة الاماميّة حتى يومنا هذا. وقد امتاز المحقّق الاصفهانيّ بأنّه كان فيلسوفا قليل النّظير في عصره، أديبا شاعرا باللّغتين العربيّة والفارسيّة، ذا مواهب فذّة لازالت مضرب المثل في الوسط العلمي، كما امتاز المحقّق النائينيّ بارائه الشّهيرة في المجال السّياسيّ والاجتماعيّ للأمة الاسلاميّة.

و قد تأثر السّيّد الطّباطبائيّ من أستاذيه خاصّة المحقّق الاصفهانيّ التأثّر البالغ في تكوين مزاجه العلميّ والفكريّ، كما تأثّر بأستاذه السّيّد أبي القاسم جعفر- ابن السّيّد محمود الموسويّ الخوانساريّ (١٣١٣/١٨٩٥ - ١٨٩٦ - ١٣٨٠/١٩٦١) الشّهير بالرّياضيّ، الذي درس عليه العلوم الرّياضيّة، وكان لا يزال يعتزّ بالتّلمذة عليه، وقد ذكر له في الذريعة، ٢/٢٣٢ - ٢٣٣ كتاب حول بعض البحوث الرّياضيّة العالية الّتي طبّق فيه بعض نظريّات أستاذه الخاصّة في هذا المجال.

ودرس الفلسفة العالية على السّيّد حسين بن السّيّد رضا بن السّيّد موسى الحسينيّ البادكوبيّ (المنسوب الى بادكوبه = باكو الحالية في اذربايجان السّوفياتية) (١٢٩٣/ ١٨٧٦ - ١٣٥٨/١٩٣٩) من اشهر اساتذة الفلسفة وما يرتبط بها في عصره.

وقد امتاز العلاّمة الطّباطبائيّ بأنّه تلمّذ على قريبه السّيّد (الميرزا) على (اغا) ابن (الميرزا) حسين القاضي الطّباطبائيّ (١٢٨٥/١٨٦٩ - ١٣٦٦/١٩٤٧) العارف والعالم الأخلاقيّ الشّهير الّذي كوّن مدرسة عرفانيّة و أخلاقيّة لازالت تعيش حيّة ولها منتمون و مرشدون.

و هكذا تكوّن للعلاّمة الطّباطبائيّ مزاج فكريّ وشخصيّة علميّة ذات جوانب عديدة، فبالاضافة إلى أنّه عالم في العلوم الدّينيّة كالفقه و أصوله، فيلسوف ذو رأي و نظر، بل وتجديد و إبداع في الفلسفة، وعارف أخلاقيّ درس العرفان النّظريّ و مارس طرقه العمليّة و تمرّن عليها و إن كانت شهرته العلميّة قد تأطّرت - إلى حدّ كبير - بالفلسفة والعرفان.

رجع العلاّمة الطّباطبائيّ إلى تبريز في ١٣٥٣ / ١٩٣٤، وعاش فيها عالما و مدرّسا خاصة للفلسفة العالية - ولكن في نطاق محدود - إلى أن هاجر في ١٣٦٤/١٩٤٥ إلى قم، أهمّ حاضرة علميّة للشّيعة الإماميّة في ايران، ومنذ أن استقرّ بها تولّى التّدريس العالي وخاصة الفلسفة العالية وعاش فيها إلى ان توفّاه الله

إلى رحمته يوم الأحد، ١٤٠٢/١/١٨ = ١٩٨١/١١/١٥ و قد نبغ له تلاميذ من أشهرهم العلاّمة مرتضى مطهّري (١٣٣٨/ ١٩٢٠ - ١٣٩٩/ ١٩٧٩).

— ٢ —

اشتهر العلاّمة الطباطبائيّ رحمه الله بالعديد من آثاره، و أهمّها تفسيره الكبير (الميزان في تفسير القرآن) والذي يصحّ أن يعدّ الدّعامة الأساسيّة للتّقدير العلميّ الّذي ناله السّيّد الطّباطبائيّ في العالم الإسلاميّ، ومن آثاره الشّهيرة (أصول فلسفه و روش رئاليسم) (أسس الفلسفة، والمنهج الواقعي) الّذي تناول فيه الفلسفة الإسلاميّة وشتّى الفلسفات المعاصرة المعارضة لها خاصّة الفلسفة الماركسية بالدّراسة المقارنة، والّذي امتاز ايضا بالهوامش والشّروح المفصّلة الّتي كتبها تلميذه المغفور له مطهّري. و(شيعه در اسلام) (التشيّع في الإسلام)، وكان في الأصل مناقشات حول التّشيّع والشّيعة دارت بينه و بين (البروفسور كينيث مورجان Prof. Kenneth Morgan) من جامعة (Colgate) في صيف ١٣٤٨/١٩٦٣، ثمّ جمعت و صدر نصّها الفارسي، ثمّ ترجمتها الإنجليزيّة.

* * *

و تفسير (الميزان) الّذي صدر نصّه العربيّ في عشرين جزءا، أثر يمثّل المزاج العلميّ والمنحى الفكريّ لمؤلّفه العلاّمة الطّباطبائيّ، رحمه الله، أصدق تمثيل، وقد وضع المؤلّف خطّة لعمله هذا رسمها بعناية و دقّة، وألزم نفسه بالسّير عليها بأمانة و إخلاص، وشرحها في فاتحة الجزء الأوّل من التّفسير.

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كان من لطف الله سبحانه بنا أن ألهمنا - منذ سنوات - القيام بنشر تفسير للقرآن الكريم **باللّغة** الإنجليزيّة، يسمو بالقارئ بهذه اللغة إلى المستوى الرّفيع لفهم كتاب الله الحكيم و آياته الخالدة، في الحدود المتيسّرة عمليّا، بما يقرّب معانيه السّامية و أهدافه الإلهيّة إلى الفكر الإنسانيّ، ويشرح الظّروف والملابسات الّتي صاحبت نزول آياته و سوره، و يستعرض النّقاط التي لابدّ من الانتباه اليها في فهم معانيه و استيعاب أغراضه، ولا يغفل السّنّة الكريمة والاستعانة بها في تفسير الكتاب العزيز، و يتناسب - من جهة أخرى - مع الذّهنيّة المعاصرة للقارئ المسلم و غير المسلم، والمسائل الّتي تثار في ذهنه، والمشاكل الّتي تتطلّب الحلّ النّظريّ لها، بالحدّ الّذي يرتبط بالقرآن الكريم وتفسيره.

الإنجليزيّة والمسئول عنها، كما كان العلّامة الطّباطبائيّ، رحمه الله، هو الزّعيم بالتّفسير الّذي اختاره لآيات الذّكر الحكيم، و بالبحوث العامّة الّتي أدرجها ضمن التّفسير، وكان هو المرجع المسئول عن كلّ ذلك.

و قد وضعنا قائمتين : (الأولى) بأسماء المؤلّفين الوارد ذكرهم في مجموع أجزاء الكتاب. (والثّانية) بأسماء الكتب الّتي هي بحاجة الى تعريف أكثر. و قد ألحقنا هاتين القائمتين بهذا الجزء (الجزء الأوّل) من التّرجمة **الإنجليزيّة فحسب** ولكنّا وضعنا جدولين آخرين يجدهما القارئ ملحقين بكلّ جزء من أجزاء التّرجمة.

و من الله نسأل و إليه نبتهل أن يجعل عملنا خالصا لوجهه الكريم، و أن يوفّقنا لإتمام ما بدأنا، و أن يسدّدنا في خطوتنا هذه و خطواتنا المقبلة، إنّه نعم المولى ونعم النّصير.

المؤسّسة العالميّة للخدمات الإسلاميّة

(لجنة التّأليف والتّرجمة والنّشر)

طهران — ايران

١٤٠٢/١/١٨

١٩٨١/١١/١٥

FOREWORD

- 1 -

The late Islamic scholar, thinker and philosopher, al-`Allãmah as-Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī (al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī) came from the celebrated Ṭabãṭabã'ī family of Tabriz. For the last three centuries, this family has produced generation after generation of renowned religious scholars in Azarbayjan (Iran). They are descendants of the second Imãm, al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali (peace be on both of them). The clan is also referred to with the title, al-Qadi.

al- `Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī was the son of as-Sayyid Muhammad ibn as-Sayyid Muhammad Ḥusayn aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī. al-`Allãmah was born in Tabriz on 30/12/1321 A.H. (17/3/1904 C.F.). His father died in 1330 (1912). The orphaned child grew up in Tabriz, and after completing the religious education there, in *circa* 1341 (1923) he went to an-Najaf al-Ashraf (Iraq), the most important centre of the highest Shi'ah religious learning.

In an-Najaf al-Ashraf, he began his higher studies with such illustrious scholars as ash-Shaykh (al-Mirza) Muhammad Ḥusayn (son of Shaykhu 'l-Islam al-Mirza `Abdu 'r-Raḥim) Na'ini al-Gharawi (1277/1860-1 — 1355/1936) and ash-Shaykh Muhammad Ḥusayn (son of al-Hajj Muhammad Ḥasan, Mu'inu 't-Tujjar) Isfahani (1296/1878 — 1361/1942).

These two, together with ash-Shaykh Diya'u 'd-Din (son of Mawla Muhammad) `Iraqi (1278/1861-2 — 1361/1942), are held in the highest regard in the Shi'ah world. They were amongxxii the most prominent scholars not only in the fields of the Shi'ite jurisprudence and the fundamentals of jurisprudence, but in all Islamic subjects. The opinions they expounded and the theories they established have been followed by all those who came after them. Each of them founded his own school of thought. They trained thousands of Shi `ah scholars and jurists; and all the *marãji`u 't- taqlīd*[1] of the Shi'ite world, to this day, are their students. The Isfahan was a philosopher, unsurpassed in his time, a man of literature and a good poet of Arabic and Persian; he was a genius whose achievements made others to look upon him as their ideal. The Na'ini has carved for himself a niche in the history because of his bold opinions and decrees in the political and social life of the Muslim *ummah.*

a1-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī was much influenced by these two teachers, (and especially by the Isfahan) in the development of his thoughts and knowledge. A third influence was of as-Sayyid Abu '1-Qasim Ja'far (son of as-Sayyid Muhammad al-Musawi) Khwansari (1313/1895-6 — 1380/1961), known as "the mathematician." al-`Allãmah at-Ṭabãṭabã'ī was proud of learning the mathematics from him. Also, he wrote a book on some topics of higher mathematics, applying therein some special theories of his teacher. The book is mentioned in *adh-Dhari `ah, vol. ii,* pp. 232 — 233.

He learned philosophy and metaphysics from as-Sayyid Ḥusayn (s/o as-Sayyid Riḍa s/o as-Sayyid Musa) al-Ḥusayni (1293/1876 — 1358/1939) of al-Badkubi[22] a well-known teacher of philosophy and related subjects in those days.

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[1] 1. مَراجعُ التَقْليد= The highest authorities of the Islamic *fiqh* (الفِـقْه = jurisprudence; rules of *sharī'ah*) whose rulings are followed by others.

2. Now called Baku, capital of Soviet Ãzarbayjan.

In ethical and spiritual field, he received his training from his relatives, as-Sayyid (al-Mirza) `Ali Agha (s/o al-Mirza Ḥusayn al-Qãḍi) Ṭabãṭabã'ī (1285/1869 — 1366/1947), a well-known divine who established a school of spiritual and ethical training which is flourishing to this day.

All those influences combined in al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī to create in him a well-balanced academic and spiritual personality. A well-respected authority on religious subjects of jurisprudence and its fundamentals; a philosopher of independent views and various new theories; an inspired model of ethical and spiritual perfection, who not only taught morality but lived it — this was al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī. Yet it will be correct to say that his scholarship was overshadowed by his fame and prestige as a philosopher and a spiritual man.

al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī returned to Tabriz in 1353 (1934) where he was welcomed as a religious scholar. There he spent his time teaching higher philosophy to willing disciples — but it was a small place for his talents. In 1364 (1945) he migrated to Qum, the most important centre of religious education in Iran. In Qum, he remained engaged in imparting knowledge of ethics, philosophy and exegesis of the Qur'ãn to the students who had already attained to a high level of erudition. There he remained till his death on Sunday, 18/1/1402 (15/11/1981). May Allãh bestow His mercy on him. Amen.

Many religious leaders of the present generation were and are among his students and disciples, the most famous being the late Murtaḍa Muṭahhari (1338/1920 — 1399/1979).

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al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī's fame rests on his various academic works — the most important being his great exegesis of the Qur'ãn, *al-Mīzãn fi tafsīri 'l-Qur'ãn.* It may correctly be said to be the foundation stone of the academic prestige which

al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī was accorded in the Muslim world.

Among his other works is *Usul-e falsafah wa rawesh-e realism* (The Fundamentals of philosophy and the Doctrine of Realism). This book is a comparative study of Islamic philosophy and various modern anti-Islamic schools of thoughts, especially the Marxism. His disciple, late Murtada Mutahhari, wrote footnotes and explanations to this work, thus making it easily comprehen-

sible to the average man.

A third book *Shi'ah dar Islam* (Shi'ah in Islam), was first published in Persian; later it was published in English also, with the title, *Shi'ite Islam.* This book is based on al-`Allãmah's discussions with Professor Kenneth Morgan of Colgate University, held in the summer of 1384 (1963) about Shi'ah and Shi'ism.

However, it is the tafsīr, *al-Mīzãn* (published in Arabic in 20 volumes) which presents the true picture of the author's academic taste and his way of thinking. Before starting this work, the author made a detailed plan to explain the Qur'ãn with the help of the Qur'ãn itself; and he faithfully fulfilled this pledge upto the end of the book. He has outlined this scheme in his Preface, in volume one.

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It was a grace of Allãh that He inspired us a few years ago to prepare and publish *a tafsīr* of the Qur'ãn in English. We wanted it to be *a tafsīr* that would help the reader to understand the divine Book and its verses, as much as practically possible — *a tafsīr* that would bring its sublime meanings and divine themes nearer to the human mind; would explain the context in which the verses and chapters were revealed, would cover the points that are necessary for understanding its meaning and fully comprehending its import — all this without ignoring the traditions of the

Prophet and his *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) in arriving at the final conclusion. On the other hand, we wanted it to be in sympathy with the mentality of the present day's readers, Muslim as well as non-Muslim, looking at the problems that boggle their minds and the questions that demand responsible and knowledgeable answers — to the extent it is related to the Qur'ãn and its explanation.

After much deliberation, we found that tafsīr*, al-Mīzãn,* satisfies our both requirements to a great extent.

So, seeking the help of Allãh, we decided to get it translated in the English language. Even before embarking on this work, we were fully aware that it was a gigantic task; we understood that the responsibility would be heavy and the efforts to bring this scheme to completion herculean; the expenses would be huge and the difficulties himalayan. We knew all of it, and our only weapon was, and is, our reliance on Allãh. We sought His help to make our dream come true; and to help us reach the end goal and prepare and publish the complete set.

A few years ago, we entered into an agreement with someone to translate the first volume; but he did not fulfil his promise, although we gave him all the time and facilities — and even more — that were needed for it.

At last we requested al-`Allãmah ar-Raḍawi to take this important responsibility on his shoulders, and we are thankful to Allãh that al-`Allãmah ar-Raḍawi fulfilled his promise.

- 4 -

We have written in short about al-`Allãmah as-Sayyid Sa'īd Akhtar ar-Raḍawi (s/o as-Sayyid Abu 'l-Ḥasan [1309/1891 --1394/1974]) in the preface of his book, *The Family Life of Islam,* in which *we, inter alia,* wrote: as-Sayyid ar-Raḍawi is one of the most sincere preachers of Islam and an active scholar, both when he was in Tanzania in

the Bilãl Muslim Mission (an Islamic organization active in Tanzania), and also now that he has returned to his own country of India. In the way of spreading Islam he has rendered enormous services and has been most active.

al-`Allãmah ar-Raḍawi has written scores of books and booklets in English, Urdu and Swahili, many of which have been published; and we have given in the above-mentioned preface some titles which have been published by us. Some of his books have been translated and published by us in French, Italian, Japanese, Thai, Indonesian, Hausa and some other languages.

Here we must express our thanks to him for the efforts he has made and the difficulties he has overcome in rendering *al-Mīzãn* into English. The original Arabic book is replete with academic terms of all disciplines, Islamic as well as non-Islamic, and with philosophical discussions related mostly to metaphysics. The learned translator has discharged his trust faithfully and conveyed the original idea into English truthfully. What you find in your hands is the true rendering of what al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī wrote in Arabic. The translator has written some footnotes where he thought it necessary — without altering the original text in any way.

- 5 -

We left the entire responsibility of the translation in the hands of the translator, relying on his erudition and knowledge of Arabic language, philosophy and Islamic subjects and his long experience in rendering purely Islamic esoteric ideas into a western language like English. Now he is personally responsible for the English translation, just as al-`Allãmah aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'ī (may Allãh have His mercy on him!) was personally responsible for the explanations of the Qur'ãnic verses, and the general discussions he wrote in his *tafsīr, al-Mizãn.*

We have prepared two lists for this book:

1. Names of the authors referred to in the twenty volumes of *al-Mīzãn*.

2. Names of the books which need a somewhat detailed introduction.

These two lists have been added in the first volume of the English translation only; two other lists will be printed with every volume.

We pray to Allãh and beseech Him to make our deed purely for His pleasure, to help us complete the work we have started, and to guide us aright in every step we put forward on this road. Surely, He is the best Guardian and the best Helper.

WORLD ORGANIZATION FOR ISLAMIC SERVICES
(*Board of Writing, Translation and Publication*)

27/10/1402
17/8/1981
Tehran — **IRAN**.

PREFACE

by

The Author

PREFACE

All praise is for Allãh Who sent down the Qur'ãn to His servant so that he may be a warner to the worlds; and blessings be on him whom He sent as a witness, and a bearer of good news and a warner, and as one inviting to Allãh by His permission, and as a light-giving torch; and on his progeny from whom Allãh kept away the uncleanliness and whom He purified a thorough purifying.

* * * * *

In this preface we shall describe the method adopted in this bookto find out the meanings of the verses of the Qur'ãn.

at-Tafsīr (التَّفسير = exegesis), that is, explaining the meanings of the Qur'ãnic verse, clarifying its import and finding out its significance, is one of the earliest academic activities in Islam. The interpretation of the Qur'ãn began with its revelation, as is clear from the words of Allãh: *Even as We have sent among you an Apostle from among you who recites to you Our communications and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know* (2:151).

The first exegetes were a few companions of the Prophet, like Ibn `Abbãs, `Abdullãh ibn `Umar, Ubayy (ibn Ka'b)) and others. (We use the word, 'companion', for other than `Ali — a.s.[3]; because he and the Imãms from his progeny

[3] 1. (a.s.): is the abbreviation of the Arabic phrase *`alay-hi/hã/himu 's-salãm* (may peace be upon him/her/them).

have an unequalled distinction — an unparalleled status, which we shall explain somewhere else. Exegesis in those days was confined to the explanation of literary aspects of the verse, the background of its revelation and, occasionally interpretation of one verse with the help of the other. If the verse was about a historical event or contained the realities of genesis or resurrection etc., then sometimes a few traditions of the Prophet were narrated to make its meaning clear.

The same was the style of the disciples of the companions, like Mujahid, Qatãdah, Ibn Abi Laylã, ash-Sha'bi, as-Suddī and others, who lived in the first two centuries of *hijrah.* They relied even more on traditions, including the ones forged and interpolated by the Jews and others. They quoted those traditions to explain the verses which contained the stories of the previous nations, or which described the realities of genesis, for example, creation of the heavens and the earth, beginning of the rivers and mountains, the "Iram" (the city of the tribe of 'Ãd), of Shaddãd the so-called "mistakes" of the prophets, the alterations of the books and things like that. Some such matters could be found even in the exegesis ascribed to the companions.

During the reign of the caliphs, when the neighbouring countries were conquered, the Muslims came in contact with the vanquished people and were involved in religious discussions with the scholars of various other religions and sects. This gave rise to the theological discourses, known in Islam as *`Ilmu 'l-kalãm* (عِلْمُ الكَلام). Also, the Greek philosophy was translated into Arabic. The process began towards the end of the first century of *hijrah* (Umayyad's period) and continued well into the third century ('Abbãsid's reign). This created a taste for intellectual and philosophical arguments in the Muslim intelligentsia.

At the same time, *at-taṣawwuf* (التَّصَوُّف) = Sufism, mysticism) raised its head in the society; and people were attracted to-wards it as it held out a promise of revealing to

them the realities of religion through severe self-discipline and ascetical rigours — instead of entangling them into verbal polemics and intellectual arguments.

And there emerged a group, who called themselves people of tradition, who thought that salvation depended on believing in the apparent meanings of the Qur'ãn and the tradition, with-out any academic research. The utmost they allowed was looking into literary value of the words.

Thus, before the second century had proceeded very far, the Muslim society had broadly split in four groups: The theologians, the philosophers, the Sufis and the people of tradition. There was an intellectual chaos in the *ummah* and the Muslims, generally speaking, had lost their bearing. The only thing to which all were committed was the word, "There is no god except Allãh, and Muhammad (s.a.w.a.)[4] is the Messenger of Allãh". They differed with each other in everything else. There was dispute on the meanings of the names and attributes of Allãh, as well as about His actions; there was conflict about the reality of the heavens and the earth and what is in and on them; there were controversies about the decree of Allãh and the divine measure; opinions differed whether man is a helpless tool in divine hands, or is a free agent; there were wranglings about various aspects of reward and punishment; arguments were kicked like ball, from one side to the other concerning the realities of death, *al-barzakh* (البَرزَخ= intervening period between death and the Day of Resurrection); resurrection, paradise and hell. In short, not a single subject, having any relevance to religion, was left without a discord of one type or the other. And this divergence, not unexpectedly, showed itself in exegesis of the Qur'ãn. Every group wanted to support his views and opinions from the Qur'ãn; and the exegesis had to

[4] (s.a.w.a.): is the abbreviation of the Arabic phrase *ṣalla 'llãhu `alayhi wa ãlih* (may Allãh's peace and blessing be upon him and his progeny)

serve this purpose.

The people of tradition explained the Qur'ãn with the traditions ascribed to the companions and their disciples. They went ahead so long as there was a tradition to lead them on, and stopped when they could not find any such tradition (provided the meaning was not self-.evident). They thought it to be the only safe method, as Allãh says: . . . *and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge say*: *"We believe in it, it is all from our Lord..."* (3:7).

But they were mistaken. Allãh has not said in His Book that rational proof had no validity. How could He say so when the authenticity of the Book itself depended on rational proof. On the other hand, He has never said that the words of the companions or their disciples had any value as religious proof. How could He say so when there were such glaring discrepancies in their opinions? In short, Allãh has not called us to the sophistry which accepting and following contradictory opinions and views would entail. He has called us, instead, to meditate on the Qur'ãnic verses in order to remove any apparent discrepancy in them. Allãh has revealed the Qur'ãn as a guidance, and has made it a light and an explanation of everything. Why should a light seek brightness from others' light? Why should a guidance be led by others' guidance? Why should "an explanation of everything" be explained by others' words?

The theologians' lot was worse all the more. They were divided into myriads of sects; and each group clung to the verse that seemed to support its belief and tried to explain away what was apparently against it.

The seed of sectarian differences was sown in academic theories or, more often than not, in blind following and national or tribal prejudice; but it is not the place to describe it even briefly. However, such exegesis should be called adaptation, rather than explanation. There are two ways of explaining a verse — One may say: "What does the Qur'ãn say?" Or one

may say: "How can this verse be explained, so as to fit on my belief?" The difference between the two approaches is quite clear. The former forgets every pre-conceived idea and goes where the Qur'ãn leads him to. The latter has already decided what to believe and cuts the Qur'ãnic verses to fit on that body; such an exegesis is no exegesis at all.

The philosophers too suffered from the same syndrome. They tried to fit the verses on the principles of Greek philosophy (that was divided into four branches: Mathematics, natural science, divinity and practical subjects including civics). If a verse was clearly against those principles it was explained away. In this way the verses describing metaphysical subjects, those explaining the genesis and creation of the heavens and the earth, those concerned with life after death and those about resurrection, paradise and hell were distorted to conform with the said philosophy. That philosophy was admittedly only a set of conjectures — unencumbered with any test or proof; but the Muslim philosophers felt no remorse in treating its views on the system of skies, orbits, natural elements and other related subjects as the absolute truth with which the exegesis of the Qur'ãn had to conform.

The Sufis kept their eyes fixed on esoteric aspects of creation; they were too occupied with their inner world to look at the outer one. Their tunnel-like vision prevented them from looking at the things in their true perspective. Their love of esoteric made them look for inner interpretations of the verses; without any regard to their manifest and clear meanings. It encouraged the people to base their explanations on poetic expressions and to use anything to prove anything. The condition became so bad that the verses were explained on the-basis of the numerical values of their words; letters were divided into bright and dark ones and the explanations were based on that division. Building castle in the air, wasn't it? Obviously, the Qur'ãn was not revealed to guide the Sufis

only; nor had it ad-dressed itself to only those who knew the numerical values of the letters (with all its ramifications); nor were its realities based on astrological calculations.

Of course, there are traditions narrated from the Prophet and the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) saying for example: "Verily the Qur'ãn has an exterior and an interior, and its interior has an interior upto seven (or according to a version, seventy) interiors . . ." But the Prophet and the Imãms gave importance to its exterior as much as to its interior; they were as much concerned with its revelation as they were with its interpretation. We shall explain in the beginning of the third chapter, "The Family of `Imrãn", that "interpretation" is not a meaning against the manifest meaning of the verse. Such an interpretation should more correctly be called "misinterpretation". This meaning of the word, "interpretation", came in vogue in the Muslim circles long after the revelation of the Qur'ãn and the spread of Islam. What the Qur'ãn means by the word, "interpretation", is some-thing other than the meaning and the significance.

In recent times, a new method of exegesis has become fashionable. Some people, supposedly Muslims, who were deeply influenced by the natural sciences (which are based on observations and tests) and the social ones (that rely on induction), followed the materialists of Europe or the pragmatists. Under the influence of those anti-Islamic theories, they declared that the religion's realities cannot go against scientific knowledge; one should not believe except that which is perceived by any one of the five senses; nothing exists except the matter and its properties. What the religion claims to exist, but which the sciences reject — like The Throne, The Chair, The Tablet and The Pen — should be interpreted in a way that conforms with the science; as for those things which the science is silent about, like the resurrection etc., they should be brought within the purview of the laws of matter; the pillars upon which the divine religious laws are based — like revelation, angel, Satan, prophet-hood, apostleship, *imãmah* (Imãmate) etc. — are

spiritual things, and the spirit is a development of the matter, or let us say, a property of the matter; legislation of those laws is manifestation of a special social genius, who ordains them after healthy and fruitful contemplations, in order to establish a good and progressive society.

They have further said: One cannot have confidence in the traditions, because many are spurious; only those traditions may be relied upon which are in conformity with the Book. As for the Book itself, one should not explain it in the light of the old philosophy and theories, because they were not based on observations and tests — they were just a sort of mental exercise which has been totally discredited now by the modern science. The best, rather the only, way is to explain the Qur'ãn with the help of other Qur'ãnic verses — except where the science has asserted something which is relevant to it.

This, in short, is what they have written, or what necessarily follows from their total reliance on tests and observations. We are not concerned here with the question whether their scientific principles and philosophic dicta can be accepted as the foundation of the Qur'ãn's exegesis. But it should be pointed out here that the objection which they have levelled against the ancient exegetes — that theirs was only an adaptation and not the explanation — is equally true about their own method; they too say that the Qur'ãn and its realities must be made to conform with the scientific theories. If not so, then why do they insist that the academic theories should be treated as true foundations of exegesis from which no deviation could be allowed?

This method improves nothing on the discredited method of the ancients.

If you look at all the above-mentioned ways of exegesis, you will find that all of them suffer from a most serious defect: They impose the results of academic or philosophic arguments on the Qur'ãnic meanings; they make the Qur'ãn conform with an extraneous idea. In this way, explanation turns into adaptation, realities of the Qur'ãn are explained away as

allegories and its manifest meanings are sacrificed for so-called “interpretations".

As we mentioned in the beginning, the Qur’ãn introduces it-self as *the guidance for the worlds* (3:96); *the manifest light* (4:174), and *the explanation of every thing* (16:89). But these people, contrary to those Qur’ãnic declarations, make it to be guided by extraneous factors, to be illuminated by some outside theories, and to be explained by something other than itself! What is that “something else"? What authority has it got? And if there is any difference in various explanations of a verse — and indeed there are most serious differences — which mediator should the Qur’ãn refer to?

What is the root-cause of the differences in the Qur’ãn's explanations? It could not happen because of any difference in the meaning of a word, phrase or sentence. The Qur’ãn has been sent down in plain Arabic; and no Arab (or Arabic-knowing non-Arab) can experience any difficulty in understanding it.

Also, there is not a single verse (out of more than six thousand) which is enigmatic, obscure or abstruse in its import; nor is there a single sentence that keeps the mind wandering in search of its meaning. After all, the Qur’ãn is admittedly the most eloquent speech, and it is one of the essential ingredients of eloquence that the talk should be free from obscurity and abstruseness.

Even those verses that are counted among the “ambiguous” ones, have no ambiguity in their meanings; whatever the ambiguity, it is in identification of the particular thing or individual from among the group to which that meaning refers. This statement needs some elaborations:

In this life we are surrounded by matter; even our senses and faculties are closely related to it. This familiarity with matter and material things has influenced our mode of thinking. When we hear a word or a sentence, our mind races to its material meaning. When we hear, for example, the words, life, knowledge, power, hearing, sight, speech, will, pleasure, anger,

creation and order, we at once think of the material manifestations of their meanings. Likewise, when we hear the words, heaven, earth, tablet, pen, throne, chair, angel and his wings, and Satan and his tribe and army, the first things that come into our minds are their material manifestations.

Likewise, when we hear the sentences, "Allãh created the universe", "Allãh did this", "Allãh knew it", "Allãh intended it" or "intends it", we look at these actions in frame of "time", because we are used to connect every verb with a tense.

In the same way, when we hear the verses: . . . *and with Us is more yet* (50:35), . . . *We would have made it from before Ourselves* (21:17), . . . *and that which is with Allãh is best* .. . (62:11) , . . . *and to Him you shall be brought back* (2:28, etc.), we attach with the divine presence the concept of "place", because in our minds the two ideas are inseparable.

Also, on reading the verses: *And when We intend to destroy a town* (17:16), *And We intend to bestow a favour...* (28:5), *and Allãh intends ease for you* (2:185), we think that the "intention" has the same meaning in every sentence, as is the case with our own intention and will.

In this way, we jump to the familiar (which most often is material) meaning of every word. And it is but natural. Man has made words to fulfil his social need of mutual intercourse; and society in its turn was established to fulfil the man's material needs. Not unexpectedly, the words became symbols of the things which men were connected with and which helped them in their material progress.

But we should not forget that the material things are constantly changing and developing with the development of expertise. Man gave the name, lamp, to a certain receptacle in which he put a wick and a little fat that fed the lighted wick which illuminated the place in darkness. That apparatus kept changing until now it has become the electric bulb of various types; and except the name "lamp" not a single component of the original lamp can be found in it.

Likewise, there is no resemblance in the balance of old

times and the modern scales — especially if we compare the old apparatus with the modern equipment for weighing and measuring heat, electric-current's flow and blood-pressure.

And the armaments of old days and the ones invented within our own times have nothing in common, except the name.

The named things have changed so much that not a single component of the original can be found in them; yet the name has not changed. It shows that the basic element that allows the use of a name for a thing is not the shape of that thing, but its purpose and benefit.

Man, imprisoned as he is within his habitat and habit, often fails to see this reality. That is why al-Ḥashawiyyah and those who believe that God has a body interpret the Qur'ãnic verses and phrases within the fame-work of the matter and the nature. But in fact they are stuck with their habit and usage, and not to the exterior of the Qur'ãn and the traditions. Even in the literal meanings of the Qur'ãn we find ample evidence that relying on the habit and usage in explanation of the divine speech would cause confusion and anomaly. For example, Allãh says: *nothing is like a likeness of Him* (42:11); *Visions comprehended Him not, and He comprehends* (all) *visions*; *and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware* (6:73)*; glory be to Him above what they ascribe* (to Him) (23:91; 37:159). These verses manifestly show that what we are accustomed to cannot be ascribed to Allãh.

It was this reality that convinced many people that they should not explain the Qur'ãnic words by identifying them with their usual and common meanings. Going a step further, they sought the help of logical and philosophical arguments to avoid wrong deductions. This gave a foot-hold to academic reasoning in explaining the Qur'ãn and identifying the individual person or thing meant by a word. Such discussions can be of two kinds:

i) The exegete takes a problem emanating from a Qur'ãnic statement, looks at it from academic and philosophical

point of view, weighs the pros and cons and with the help of the philosophy, science and logic decides what the true answer should be. Thereafter, he takes the verse and fits it anyhow on that answer which, he thinks, is right.

The Muslim philosophers and theologians usually followed this method; but, as mentioned earlier, the Qur'ãn does not approve of it.

ii) The exegete explains the verse with the help of other relevant verses, meditating on them together — and meditation has been forcefully urged upon by the Qur'ãn itself — and identifies the individual person or thing by its particulars and attributes mentioned in the verse.

No doubt this is the only correct method of exegesis.

Allãh has said: *and We have revealed the Book to you explaining clearly everything* (16:89). Is it possible for such a book not to explain its own self? Also He has described the Qur'ãn in these words: *a guidance for mankind and clear evidence of guidance and discrimination* (between wrong) (2:185); and He has also said: *and We have sent down to you a manifest light* (4:174). The Qur'ãn is, accordingly, a guidance, an evidence, a discrimination between right and wrong and a manifest light for the people to guide them aright and help them in all their needs. Is it imaginable that it would not guide them aright in its own matter, while it is their most important need? Again Allãh says:

And (as for) *those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them onto Our ways* (29:69). Which striving is greater than the endeavour to understand His Book? And which way is more straight than the Qur'ãn?

Verses of this meaning are very numerous, and we shall discuss them in detail in the beginning of the third chapter, The Family of `Imrãn.

Allãh taught the Qur'ãn to His Prophet and appointed him as the teacher of the Book: *The Faithful Spirit has descended with it upon your heart that you may be of the warners, in*

plain Arabic language (26:193-4); *and We have revealed to you the Reminder that you may make clear to men what has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect* (16: 44); . . . *an Apostle . . . who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom* (62:2).

And the Prophet appointed his progeny to carry on this work

after him. It is clear from his unanimously accepted tradition:

I am leaving behind among you two precious things; as long as you hold fast to them you will never go astray after me: The Book of Allãh and my progeny, my family members; and these two shall never separate from each other until they reach me (on) the reservoir.

And Allãh has confirmed, in the following two verses, this decl- aration of the Prophet that his progeny had the real knowledge of the Book: *Allãh only desires to keep away the uncleanliness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a* (thorough) *purifying* (33:33); *Most surely it is an honoured Qur'ãn, in a Book that is hidden*; *None do touch it save the purified ones* (56:77—79).

And the Prophet and the Imãms from his progeny always used this second method for explaining the Qur'ãn, as may be seen in the traditions that have been narrated from them on exegesis, some of which will be quoted in this book in appropriate places. One cannot find a single instance in their traditions where they might have taken help of an academic theory or philosophical postulate for explaining a verse.

The Prophet has said in a sermon: "Therefore, when mischiefs come to confuse you like the segments of darkened night, then hold fast to the Qur'ãn; as it is the intercessor whose inter-cession shall be granted; and a credible advocate; and whoever keeps it before him, it will lead him to the Garden; and whoever keeps it behind, it will drive him to the Fire; and it is the

guide that guides to the best path; and it is a book in which there is explanation, particularization and recapitulation; and it is a decisive (world), and not a joke; and there is for it a manifest (meaning) and an esoteric (one); thus its apparent (meaning) is firm, and its esoteric (one) is knowledge; its exterior is elegant and its interior deep; it has (many) boundaries, and its boundaries have (many) boundaries; its wonders shall not cease, and its (unexpected marvels shall not be old. There are in it the lamps of guidance and the beacon of wisdom, and guide to knowledge for him who knows the attributes. Therefore, one should extend his sight; and should let his eyes reach the attribute; so that one who is in perdition may get deliverance, and one who is entangled may get free; because meditation is the life of the heart of the one who sees, as the one having a light (easily) walks in darkness; therefore, you must seek good deliverance and (that) with little waiting.

`Ali (a.s.) said, *inter alia,* speaking about the Qur'ãn in a sermon: "Its one part speaks with the other, and one portion testifies about the other."

This is the straight path and the right way which was used by the true teachers of the Qur'ãn and its guides, may Allãh's blessings be on them all !

We shall write, under various headings, what Allãh has helped us to understand from the honoured verses, by the above-mentioned method. We have not based the explanations on any philosophical theory, academic idea or mystical revelation.

We have not put into it any outside matter except a fine literary point on which depends the understanding of Arabic eloquence, or a self-evident or practical premises which can be understood by one and all.

From the discussions, written according to the above- mentioned method, the following subjects have become crystal-clear:

1. The matters concerning the names of Allãh, and His attributes, like His Life, Knowledge, Power, Hearing, Sight and Oneness etc. As for the Person of Allãh, you will find that the Qur'ãn believes that He needs no description.

2. The matters concerning the divine actions, like creation, order, will, wish, guidance, leading astray, decree, – measure, compulsion, delegation (of Power), pleasure, displeasure and other similar actions.

3. The matters concerned with the intermediary links between Allãh and man, like the Curtain, the Tablet, the Pen, the Throne, the Chair, the Inhabited House, the Heavens, the Earth, the Angels, the Satans, and the Jinns etc.

4. The details about man before he came to this world.

5. The matters related to man in this life, like the history of mankind, knowledge of his self, the foundation of society, the prophethood and the apostleship, the revelation, the inspiration, the book and the religion and law. The high status of the prophets, shining through their stories, come under this heading.

6. The knowledge about man after he departs from this world, that is, *al-Barzakh.*

7. The matters about human character. Under this heading come the various stages through which the friends of Allãh pass in their spiritual journey, like submission, faith, benevolence, humility, purity of intention and other virtues.

(We have not gone into details of the verses of the law, as more appropriately it is a subject for the books of jurisprudence.)

As a direct result of this method, we have never felt any need to interpret a verse against its apparent meaning. As we have said earlier, this type of interpretation is in fact misinterpretation. As for that “interpretation” which the Qur’ãn has mentioned in various verses, it is not a type of “meaning"; it is something else.

At the end of the commentaries, we have written some traditions of the Prophet and the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*), narrated by the Sunni and Shi'ah narrators. But we have not included the opinions of the companions and their disciples, because, first, there is too much confusion and contradiction in

them; and second, they are not vested with any authority in Islam.

On going through those traditions of the Prophet and the Imãms (peace be on them all!), you will notice that this "new" method of exegesis (adopted in this book) is in reality the oldest and the original method which was used by the Teachers of the Qur'ãn (peace of Allãh be on them all!).

Also, we have written separately various topics — philosophical, academic, historical, social and ethical — when there was a need for it. In all such discussions, we have confined our talk to the basic premises, without going in too much detail.

We pray to Allãh, High is He, to guide us and keep our talk to the point; He is the Best Helper and the Best Guide.

Dependent on Allãh,

Muḥammad Ḥusayn aṭ-Ṭabãṭabã'i.

al-Mīzãn

Volume One

Chapter One

*ch.a, tirs.*1-88

Chapter One

Fãtiḥatu 'l-Kitãb

(The Opening of the Book)

7 verses — Mecca



سُورَةُ الفَاتِحَة ١

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ١
ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ٢ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ
ٱلرَّحِيمِ ٣ مَٰلِكِ يَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ ٤
إِيَّاكَ نَعۡبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسۡتَعِينُ ٥
ٱهۡدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمَ ٦ صِرَٰطَ
ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ غَيۡرِ ٱلۡمَغۡضُوبِ
عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ٧

وَآيَاتُهَا سَبۡع

***In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful* (1). *All praise is due to Allãh, the Lord of the Worlds* (2). *The Beneficent the Merciful* (3). *The Master of the Day of Judgement* (4). *Thee do we worship and Thee do we beseech for help* (5).**

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful*: People often take the name of one of their great and powerful personalities at the time of doing or beginning a work. By this association, it is believed, the work would achieve success, greatness and blessings; or that it would be a memorial to keep the named one's memory alive for ever. This is also observed in naming a child, a project, a house or an association — they give it the name of a deeply loved or highly respected person, so that his name would continue in this form; for

example, a man names his son after his father, in order to perpetuate the father's memory.

This verse runs on the same line. Allãh began His speech with His Own name — Great is His name — so that the ideas taught in this chapter be stamped by, and associated with it. Also, it teaches a lesson to mankind, showing them the perfect manner of starting all their talks and actions; it guides them to put the stamp of the divine name on all their activities; doing every work for the sake of Allãh, associating it with His good names and attributes. In this way that action would neither be rendered null and void, nor remain incomplete; it has been started in the name of Allãh, and negation and annihilation cannot reach that sacred name.

Allãh has declared variously in the Qur'ãn that what is not for His Person must perish, is in vain; He will proceed to the deeds not done for His sake and shall render them as scattered floating dust; He shall forfeit what they have done and shall nullify their deeds; and that nothing shall remain except His honoured Person.

Therefore, what is done for the sake of Allãh and performed in His name, shall continue and will not perish. Everything, every work and every affair shall have its share of eternity — as much as it is related to Allãh. It is this reality that has been hinted at in the universally accepted tradition of the Prophet: "Every important affair, not begun with the name of Allãh, shall remain incomplete . . ." The word *al-abtar* (اَلأبْتَر = translated here as "incomplete") means a thing whose end is cut off, an animal whose tail is severed.

The preposition "*bi*" (بِـ = in, with), in the phrase "In the name of Allãh", is related to an implied verb, "I begin". This verse, at this particular place, begins the speech which is a single action; this singleness comes from the singleness of its meaning; that is, the meaning intended to be conveyed, the aim and purpose of the speech.

Allãh has mentioned the purpose for which His speech —

the whole Qur'ãn — has been revealed: . . . indeed, there has come to you a light and a clear Book from Allãh; with it Allãh guides him who follows His pleasure into the ways of safety . . . (5:15—16). There are other verses which show that the aim with which the Book — the speech of Allãh — has been sent down is the guidance of the people.

Therefore, the full import of the sentence would be as follows: The guidance, total guidance is begun with the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful; He is Allãh, Whom the servants return to; He is Beneficent, Who has opened the way of His All-encompassing mercy for believers and disbelievers alike, the mercy which provides them with all that is necessary and good for their existence and life; He is Merciful, Who has reserved His special mercy for the believers, the mercy which ensures their happiness in the life hereafter and their nearness to their Lord. Allãh has said: . . . *and My mercy encompasses all things*; *so I will ordain it* (specially) *for those who guard* (against evil) *and pay zakãt, and those who believe in our signs* (7:156). This explanation has been written, putting this verse in the framework of the whole Qur'ãn, of which it is the first sentence.

Again, Allãh has repeatedly mentioned "chapter" in His speech. For example: *Say*: *"Then bring a chapter like this...*" (10:38); *Say*: *"Then bring ten chapters like it, forged* . . ." (11:13); *And whenever a chapter is revealed* . . . (9:86); (This is) *a chapter which We have revealed* . . . (24:1). It shows that Allãh Himself has divided His speech in various parts, each part being called a chapter. It naturally means that every chapter is a single unit in structure and in fullness of meaning; and that that unity is not found between various verses of a chapter or between one chapter and the other. It necessarily follows that the theme of every chapter is different from the other; every chapter is revealed with a certain aim in view, and when that aim is achieved the chapter comes to its end.

Therefore, the verse, “In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful” coming at the beginning of every chapter, refers to the particular theme of that chapter.

Accordingly, this verse, at the beginning of this chapter of “The Opening", refers also to the theme of this chapter. It appears from its semantic flow that its purpose is to praise Allãh and to pledge the believer's servitude (declaring that he worships only Allãh and seeks help from Him only) and then to pray for divine guidance. This speech has been uttered by Allãh, on be-half of His servant, so that the servant may learn how, by repeating these words, he may show his gratitude to, and servitude before, Allãh.

This pledging of servitude is the important work which the servant of Allãh intends to do; and which he begins in the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. In this context, this verse would mean: In Thy name, I pledge my servitude to Thee.

In this first verse of this chapter, therefore, the preposition, “in", is related to the implied verb, “I begin"; and the aim is to perfect the sincere servitude by addressing the pledge to Allãh Himself. Some people have said that the implied verb is “I seek help” (by); although this view is not objectionable, but “I begin” is more appropriate — the chapter explicitly seeks divine help, “and Thee do we beseech for help"; therefore, it is not necessary in the beginning.

“*al-Ism*” (اَلاِسْمُ = name) is the word that points to the named thing or person. It is derived from *as-simah* (السِّمَةَ = sign, identifying mark) or *as-sumuww* (السُّمُوّ = height, eminence). In any case, it is the word by which an individual thing or person is spoken of or spoken to. Naturally, it is other than, and separate from, the named thing.

The following is a sample of the academic exercises so much loved by the ancients:

There is a name that means “the person himself seen in

the light of an attribute"; such a name is not separate from the named person; it is the person himself. The word *al-'Ãlim* (العالِم = The Knower), one of the divine names, points to the Person of Allãh as seen in the light of His attribute of Knowledge. At the same time, it refers to Allãh Who cannot be known except by one or the other of His attributes. Let us explain this matter in another way: "Name" points to the named person; likewise the personal traits and characteristics point to the holder of those traits and characteristics — in this way, we may say that the personal traits are the "names" of the person concerned. "Name", accordingly, can be of two kinds: in words, and in substance. The direct name is of the second type, ,that is, the personal trait that points to its own subjects — for example, the "Knowledge" that points to Allãh, the holder of the knowledge. And the word "the Knower" is in reality an indirect name — it points to the direct name, that is, the attribute of knowledge, which in its turn directly points to its holder, that is, Allãh. "Knowledge" is, thus, the name of Allãh, and "the Knower" is "the name of the name".

The above was the result of the academic analysis (or should we say, mental luxury!) mentioned earlier; but such things should not be imposed on language and literature. "Name", according to the "plain Arabic language", means what we have written earlier. There was a lot of controversy going on among the theologians of the early centuries of Islam: whether the name was separate from the named person or not. Such unnecessary polemics is out of place at present times; it is self-evident that "name" and "named" are two things, and not one. We should not waste time and energy in quoting the ancients' arguments and counter-arguments, and in judging who was right.

"Allãh" (اللّٰه = the divine name) was originally *al-Ilãh* (الإلٰه); the "I" (إ) in the middle was omitted because of frequent use. *al-Ilãh is* derived from *alaha* (أَلَهَ = he worshipped) or from *aliha* or *waliha* (أَلِهَ or وَلِهَ = he was

bewildered). It is on paradigm of *al-fi`ãl* ( الفِعالُ ) in meaning of *al-maf`ũl* (المَفعُول = object-noun); for example, *al-kitãb* (اَلكِتابُ) means *al-maktũb* (اَلمَكْتوبُ = the written); likewise *al-Ilãh* means *al-Ma'lũh* (اَلمَألوهُ) is, the One who is worshipped, or the One about whom minds are bewildered.

Quite clearly, it has become the proper name of God. It was commonly used in this meaning in Arabic long before the Qur'ãn was revealed. The fact that even pre-Islamic Arabs used this name for God, may be inferred from the following verses:

And if you should ask them who created them, they would certainly say: *"Allãh*". . . (43:87).

. . . and they say: *"This for Allãh*" *— so they assert — "and this is for our associates*". . . (6:136).

Other divine names may be used as adjectives for this name; for example, "the Beneficent and the Merciful Allãh"; also, this name is used as subject of the verbs derived from other divine names; for example, "Allãh knew", "Allãh had mercy", "Allãh gave sustenance" etc. But the word, "Allãh", is never used as adjective to any other name, nor is the verb derived from it used to describe other names. It is a clear proof that it is the proper name of God.

The divine existence, inasmuch as Allãh is the God of everything, presupposes that He should have all the attributes of perfection; and, as a result, this name points to all perfect attributes. That is why it is said that the name, "Allãh", means "the Person Who is the Essential Being, and Who encompasses all the attributes of perfection". But the fact is that it is the proper name of God and no other meaning (except that related to worship or bewilderment) has been taken into consideration here.

"*ar-Raḥmãn ar-Raḥīm*" (اَلرَّحْمنُ الرَّحيمُ = The Beneficent, the Merciful) are two adjectives derived from *ar-raḥmah* (اَلرَّحْمَةُ = mercy).

When you see someone suffering from a deficiency which he cannot remove by himself, the reaction which you experience and which tells you to provide him with what he needs in order to make up his deficiency, is called mercy. Ultimately, mercy means giving and bestowing to fulfil other's need. It is this latter meaning in which this attribute is used for Allãh.

"*ar-Raḥmãn*" (اَلرَّحْمنُ) is on a paradigm which is used for magnification and exaggeration. "*ar-Raḥīm*" (اَلرَّحْيِمُ) is a paradigm of *as-Sifãtu 'l-mushabbahah* (اَلصِّفَةُ الْمُشَبِّهَةُ = perpetual adjective, inseparable attribute). Therefore, "*ar-Rahmãn*" (translated here as "the Beneficent") relates to that all-encompassing mercy that is bestowed upon the believers and the unbelievers alike. It is used in the Qur'ãn, mostly in this meaning. Allãh says: *The Beneficent* (God) *is firm in power* (20:5); *Say*: *"As for him who remains in error, the Beneficent* (God) *will surely prolong his length of days. . .* (19:75). "*ar-Raḥīm*" (translated here as "the Merciful"), on the other hand, is more appropriate for that mercy which shall remain for ever, the perpetual inexhaustible mercy that shall be bestowed on the believers in the life hereafter. Allãh says: . . . *and He is Merciful to the believers* (33:43); *surely to them* (*i.e.,* the believers) *He is Compassionate, Merciful* (9:117). That is why it is said that the mercy of "*ar-Rahmãn*" *is* common for the believers and the unbelievers, and that of "*ar-Raḥīm*" *is* reserved for the believers.

QUR'ÃN: *All praise is due to Allãh*: It has been said that "*alḥamd*" (اَلحَمْدُ) is to praise someone for a good acquired by his own intention, "*al-madḥ*" (اَلمَدحُ = also translated as praise) is more general — it is used to praise even that good which someone is given without his will and power. If you praise someone for his benevolence, you may use either word — *al-ḥamd* or *al-madḥ* but if you want to praise a pearl for its lustre, you may use the verb *al-madḥ,* but not *al-ḥamd*

because the pearl has not acquired that lustre by its own will and power.

"*al*" (اَلْ = translated here as "a11") in "*al-ḥamd*" denotes either species or praise, or each and every praise. The end-result is the same in either case; that is why it has been translated here as "a11".

Allãh says: *That is Allãh, your Lord, the Creator of every thing* (40:62). Whatever there is, is created by Allãh. Again He says: . . . *Who made good everything that He has created* (32: 7). Everything is good because it has been created by Allãh and is attributed to Him. In other words, a thing becomes good because it is created by Allãh; and everything created by Him is good. Every creature is good and beautiful because Allãh has made it so; and every good and beautiful thing is created by Allãh, attributed to Him. Allãh says: *He is Allãh, the One, the Subduer* (of all) (39:4); *And the faces are humbled before the Living, the Self-subsistent God* . . . (20:111). In other words, He has created the creatures by His own knowledge, power and will, and not because He was compelled by someone else to do so. Therefore, everything is His own good work, done by His own will.

The above discourse was about Allãh's action. Coming to His names, He has said: Allãh is He besides Whom there is no god; His are the very best names (20:8); And Allãh's are the best names; therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names (7:180). It is clear that Allãh is good in His names and good in His actions; and that every good and beauty emanates from Him.

Therefore, Allãh is praised for His good names as He is praised for His good actions. Every praise, uttered by any speaker for any good deed is in reality addressed to Allãh only; because every good (which is the object of praise) emanates from Him only. In short, to Him belongs the species of the praise and all and every praise.

The verse: "Thee do we worship", shows that the whole

chapter is revealed on behalf of man. Allãh teaches him in this chapter how to praise his Lord and how to show his allegiance to, and humility towards, Him. And the phrase, “All praise is due to Allãh", further strengthens this inference, as will be seen in the next paragraph.

The praise means to attribute, to ascribe; and Allãh has declared that He is above all that His servants ascribe to Him. He has said: *Hallowed be Allãh* (for freedom) *from what they ascribe, except the servants of Allãh, freed* (from sins) (37:159 -160). This declaration is general and unconditional; and it is further proved by the fact that not a single verse in the Qur’ãn ascribes the action of “praise” to anyone except Allãh and some of the prophets (who were doubtlessly freed from sins). Allãh addresses Nab (Noah — a.s.) in these words: . . . *Say*: *“All praise is due to Allãh who delivered us from the unjust people*” (23:28). And He quotes Ibrahīm (Abraham — a.s.) as saying: “*Praise be to Allãh, Who gave me in old age Isma `il and Isḥãq . . .*” (14:39) . Also, He told His Prophet, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), in several places, *And say*: *“Praise be to Allãh . . .*” (27:93). Further, he says about Dãwũd and Sulaymãn (peace be on both of them): . . . *and they both said*: *“Praise be to Allãh . . .”* (27:15). Another exception is of the people of the Paradise — and they also are freed from spite and rancour as well as from vain and sinful words: . . . *and the last of their cry shall be. “Praise be to Allãh, the Lord of the worlds*” (10:10).

As for other creatures, the Qur’ãn never says that they “praise” Allãh — they always “glorify Allãh with His praise". Allãh says: . . . *and the angels declare His glory with the praise of their Lord . . .* (42:5)*; and the thunder declares His glory with His praise . . .* (13:13)*; and there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise . . .* (17:44). In all these verses “praise” is preceded by glorifying; rather “glorifying” is the main verb and “with praise” is only a clause, attached to it. None except Allãh may comprehend the beauty and perfection of His work, nor

can anyone else understand the beauty and perfection of His names and attributes. Allãh says: . . *they do not comprehend Him in knowledge* . . . (20:110). In this background, if they were to praise Him it would mean that they had comprehended Him in their knowledge; in other words, Allãh would be surrounded by their limited understanding, confined within the boundary of their comprehension. Therefore, they were careful enough to first declare His glory from all the limits of their comprehension, before starting His praise. Allãh says: . . . *surely Allãh knows and you do not know* (16:74).

So far as His purified servants are concerned, He treats their utterance of praise as though He Himself has said it, because they are free from sins and defects.

From the above discourse, it becomes crystal-clear what the good manner of servitude demands: The servant should praise his Lord in exactly the same words the Lord Himself has chosen for Himself; no deviation from it would be tolerable, as the Prophet has said in an universally accepted tradition; "I do not enumerate Thy praise; Thou art as Thou Thyself hast praised Thyself . . ."

Therefore, the divine word, "All praise is due to Allãh", is a sort of a training to the servant — a training without which he could not know how to declare the praise of Allãh.

QUR'ÃN: *the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Master of the Day of Judgement*: "*ar-Rabb*" (اَلرَّبُ) is the Master Who manages the affairs of His servant. The word, thus, connotes the idea of ownership. Ownership (in our social structure) is a special relationship of one thing with another — a relationship that allows the owner to do with the owned thing as he wishes. When we say, "This thing belongs to us", it shows that it has a special relationship with us that allows us to do with it as we wish;

had it not been for this relationship, we would not have had this authority over it. In this social context, it is an idea which the society has laid down but which has no existence out-side imagination. This idea is derived from another real and positive concept, which too is called “ownership": Our limbs and faculties, like the sight, the hearing, the hands and the feet, belong to us — they exist because of our own existence, they have no independent existence, they depend on us for their existence and continuity, and we use them as we like. This is the real ownership.

The ownership that may be attributed to Allãh is the real one, and not that which is based on subjective outlook. Obviously the real ownership cannot be disjoined from management of the affairs of the owned thing. The owned thing depends on the owner in its existence, as well as in all affairs related to its existence. Allãh is “*ar-Rabb*” *the* Lord of everything because the Lord is the owner who manages the affairs of, and looks after, the owned thing — and only Allãh has this attribute.

"*al-‘Ãlamīn*” (اَلْعَالَمِيْنَ) is the plural of *al-`ãlam* (اَلْعَالَمُ = the world) which literally means, “what one is known with". This paradigm is used for “instrument ", like *al -qãlab* (اَلْقالَبُ = the mold, the form), *al-khãtam* (اَلْخاتَمُ = the seal, , the instrument of sealing), and *aṭ-ṭãba‘* (اَلطّابعُ = the stamp, the impress). The word *al-‘ãlam* is used for the universe — the whole creation taken together. Also it is used for each genes or species taken separately, for example, the inorganic world, the vegetable world, the animal world, the human world. It is also used for a class of a species, like the Arab world, the African world etc. This last meaning is more appropriate in the context of these verses: The verses that enumerate the good names of Allãh until they come to “the Master of the Day of Judgement". The judgement is reserved for mankind alone or together with the jinn. Therefore, the “worlds” should

refer to the worlds of the human beings and the jinn, that is, their various groups. The word *al-`ãlamin* (the worlds) has been used in this sense in other Qur'ãnic verses too. Allãh says: . . . *and has chosen you above the women of the worlds* (3:42)*; . . . so that he may be a warner to the worlds* (25:1); *What! do you commit an indecency which any one in the worlds has not done before you* (7:80).

"The Master of the Day of Judgement": We have explained above the meaning of ownership, that is, mastership. The word "*al-mãlik*" (اَلْمالِكُ) is derived from *al-milk* (اَلْمِلْكُ = possession, to possess). Some reciters have read this word as "*al –malik*" (اَلْمَلِكُ = the sovereign, the king); it is derived

from *al-mulk* (اَلْمُلْكُ = country; kingdom). The king is the one who has the authority to manage his nation's affairs; nevertheless he does not own the nation or the country. In other words, he holds the authority for management and administration.

The reciters have given the reasons for their preference of either recitation. But the fact remains that Allãh is the Master as well as the King, and both words are equally correct, so far as the divine authority is concerned. Looking at it from linguistic point of view, the word, "King" is generally used in context of time and period. It is said, "the King of that time"; but they do not say "the master of that time", as it would be stretching the meaning too far. In this verse, Allãh has used this word in reference to a certain "day"; therefore, linguistically, it would be more proper to say, "the King of the Day of Judgement". Moreover, Allãh has used the word, "Kingdom" in context of the same day in other verse: *To whom belongs the kingdom of this day? To Allãh, the One, the Subduer* (of all) (40:16).

TRADITIONS

ar-Rich (a.s.) said in explanation *of* the divine words: *In the name of Allãh*: *"*It means: `I mark my soul with one *of* the marks *of* Allãh', and it is (His) worship." He was asked: "What is the `mark'?" He said; "The brand." (*`Uyunu 'l-akhbdr* and *Ma 'ant ' l-akhbdr*)

The author says: This meaning emanates from the explanation given earlier that the preposition, "in", herein connotes beginning. As the servant marks his worship with the name of Allãh, he brands his soul — real doer of the worship — with one of the divine marks.

It is narrated in *at-Tahdhīb* from aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.), and in *`Uyunu 'l-akhbãr* and *at-Tafsīr* of al-'Ayyãshi from ar-Riḍã (a.s.) that this verse "is nearer to the Greatest name of Allãh than the iris of the eye is from its white".

The author says: This tradition will be explained when we shall talk about the Greatest name.

Amīru 'l-mu'minīn (a.s.) said that (this verse) is from the chapter of The Opening; and verily the Apostle of Allãh used to recite it and count it as one of its verses, and he used to say, "The Opening of the Book is 'the seven oft-repeated' (verses)". (*`Uyunu 'l-akhbãr*)

The author says: This matter has also been narrated by the Sunni narrators. ad-Dãr-quṭnī narrates from Abu Hurayrah that he said: "The Apostle of Allãh said: When you recite (the chapter of) The Praise (i.e., The Opening), you shall recite, *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful,* because it is the source of the Book and (is) the seven oft-repeated (verses), and, *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful* is one of its verses. aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "What have they done? May Allãh destroy them! They proceeded to the greatest verse of the Book of Allãh, and thought that it would be an innovation (unlawful act)

if they recited it loudly!” (*al-Khiṣãl*)

al-Bãqir (a.s.) said: “They stole the most exalted verse of the Book of Allãh, (that is) *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.* It should be recited at the start of every big or small work, so that it may be blessed.

The author says: There are numerous traditons of this meaning coming from the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*). All of them prove that the verse (*In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful*) *is* a part of every chapter, except the ninth ("Repentance"); and the Sunni traditions also prove it:

Anas (ibn Mãlik) said that the Apostle of Allãh said: “Just now a chapter has been sent down to me.” Then he began reciting, “*In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*” (*aṣ-Ṣahīh,* Muslim).

Abu Dãwũd narrates from Ibn `Abbãs (and they say that its chain is “correct") that he said: “Verily, the Apostle of Allãh did not know the separation of a chapter (and in another narrative it is ‘end of a chapter’) until came down to him: *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.*"

The author says: This matter has been narrated by Shi `ite narrators also from al-Bãqir (a.s.).

It is reported in *al-Kãfī, at-Tawḥīd, Ma`ãni 'l-akhbãr* and *at-Tafsīr* of al-‘Ayyãshi that aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said, *inter alia,* in a tradition: “And Allãh is God of everything, *ar-Raḥmãn* (the Beneficent) for all His creations, *ar-Raḥīm* (the Merciful) especially for the believers."

as -Sadiq (as.) has said: “*ar-Raḥmãn* (the Beneficent) is a special name with a general attribute; and *ar-Raḥīm* (the Merciful) is a general name with a special attribute."

The author says: The preceding commentary may explain why the mercy of “the Beneficent” is general for the believer and the unbeliever alike, and why that of “the Merciful” is reserved for the believer only. The description

given in this tradition that “the Beneficent is a special name with a general attribute, and the Merciful is a general name with a special attribute", perhaps this refers to the fact that the mercy of the Beneficent is limited to this world and is common or the whole creation; and that of the Merciful is common to this world and the here-after but is reserved for the believer. In other words, the mercy of the Beneficent is reserved for the creative blessings that are bestowed on believers and unbelievers alike; and that of the Merciful is common to the creative and legislative blessings (the latter opening the way to happiness and felicity) and is reserved for believers, because only the bounties bestowed upon them will last for ever, and the (good) end is for guarding (against evil) and for piety.

It is narrated in *Kashfu 'l-ghummah* that aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “A mule of my father was lost. He said: ‘If Allãh brought it back to me, I would thank Him with praises He would be pleased with.’ Shortly afterwards, it was brought before him with its saddle and rein (intact). When he sat on it and arrayed his clothes, he raised his head towards heaven and said: ‘Praise be to Allãh.’ He said nothing more. Then he said: `I did not omit, nor did I leave out, anything; I have declared that all praises are for Allãh, Powerful and Great is He!; because there is no praise but it is included in this (formula).”

It is narrated in *`Uyunu 'l-akhbãr* that Ali (a.s.) was asked about its explanation. He said: “Verily, Allãh has explained to His servants broadly some of His bounties on them, as they can-not know all His bounties in detail — they are beyond enumeration and description. Therefore, He said: Say: ‘All praise is for Allãh on what He has bestowed upon us.’ ”

The author says: The Imãm points to the fact mentioned earlier that the praise, in this verse, is from the servant, and that Allãh has revealed it to teach him the manners of servitude and worship.

FROM PHILOSOPHICAL POINT OF VIEW

Reason tells us that an effect, as well as all its characteristics and affairs, depend on its cause; whatever perfection it may be having, is a shadow of the cause. If beauty or goodness has any existence, then its perfect and independent entity is for Allãh only, as He is the Cause of all causes. The praise and thank is ad-dressed, in reality, to the cause which creates the perfection and excellence referred to. As every perfection is caused by Allãh, every praise and thank, in reality, is addressed to Allãh. There-fore, all praise is for, and due to Allãh.

QUR'ÃN: *Thee do we worship and Thee do we beseech for help*: "*al- 'Abd*" (اَلْعَبْدُ) means slave, a human being who is owned. In its abstract sense, it is applied to other intellectual beings also, as the words of Allãh show: *There is no one in the heavens and the earth but will come to the Beneficent God as* ("*`abdan"* عَبْداً) *a slave* (19:93). In modern usage, it is commonly translated as 'servant'.

"*al-`Ibãdah*" ( اَلْعِبَادَةُ = to serve, to worship, to obey) is derived from this word. Its inflexion and meaning changes according to the context. al-Jawharī has written in his dictionary, *aṣ-Ṣiḥãh,* that "the basis of *al- `ubũdiyyah* (اَلْعُبُودِيَّةُ = bondage, servitude) is "*al -khuḍu'* (اَلْخُضُوعُ) submission." But this explanation is not of the word; it only shows a concomitant quality of its meaning; because *al-khuḍũ'* is used with the preposition "*li*" (لِـ), and *al- `ibãdah* is used without any preposition.[5]

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[5] This argument seems inconclusive. If two words are synonymous, it is not necessary for them to have the same preposition. *al -Mawlã* (اَلْمَوْلٰـى) and *al-awlã* (اَلأَوْلٰـى) have the same meaning — guardian, master; but the former is used without a preposition while the latter is followed by the preposition "*b i*" (بِـ = for, with, etc.).

When a servant of Allãh worships Him, he stands before the Lord as a slave stands before his master. That is why worship is diametrically opposed to arrogance and pride — but it is not so opposed to polytheism; after all, a slave may be jointly owned by two or more masters. Allãh says: *Verily those who are arrogant to My worship shall soon enter Hell, disgraced* (40:60). Also He says: . . . *and he should not join anyone in the worship of his Lord* (18:110). It should be noted here that polytheism — joining someone in the worship of Allãh — is a possibility, and that is why it has been made subject of this prohibition; none forbids an impossible thing. But arrogance does not exist with worship, and that is why the expression, "arrogant to my worship ", has been used in the first verse.

Servitude is effective in those affairs which are owned or controlled by the master; and not in other matters related to the slave, like his being son of his father, or having a height of so many centimetres — there is no submission or servitude in such things. But the mastership of Allãh is not limited; His mastership is not shared by anyone else, nor is the servitude of the creatures divided between Allãh and someone else. A master has only limited authority over his servants — he may employ them to perform certain duties, but he cannot kill them or punish them unjustly. But Allãh has total and all-encompassing authority over His servants; He does whatsoever He wills with them and about them. His ownership is unconditional and unlimited; and the servitude of His creatures is likewise unconditional and unlimited. This "ownership" is true and exclusive on both sides: The Lord has the exclusive ownership, and the slave has the exclusive servitude. The construction of the sentence, "Thee do we worship", points to this exclusiveness — the object, "Thee", has been placed before the verb, and worship is mentioned without any condition.

It has been explained earlier that the owned thing exists

and subsists because of, and with, its owner. In this sense, it should not divert an onlooker's attention from its owner. You look at a house belonging to Zayd; if you are looking at it merely as a house, you may possibly lose sight of Zayd; but if you look at it from the angle that it is a property of Zayd, you cannot wean your thoughts from him.

The only true attribute of the universe is that it is created and owned by Allãh. Nothing in the creation can hide the divine presence, nor should looking at these things make one forgetful of Allãh. He is ever present, as He has said: *Is it not sufficient as regards your Lord that he is a witness over all things? Now surely they are in doubt as to the meeting of their Lord*; *now surely He encompasses all things* (41:53-54). The true worship, therefore, is that in which the worshipped and the worshipper both are present. Allãh should be worshipped as the One who is present before the worshipper — and that is why the third person of the preceding verses has been changed to the second person in this verse, “Thee do we worship". The worshipper should be present before his Lord, not only with his body but also with his soul; otherwise, the worship would be a body without soul, a form without life. Nor should he divide his attention between his Lord and someone (or something) else — neither openly, (as the idol-worshippers do) — nor secretly (like the one whose mind is on something else while worshipping Allãh, or the one who worships Allãh because he wants to enter the Garden or to save himself from the hell). All these diversions are various facets of poly-theism, and Allãh has forbidden it in His Book: *. . . therefore, worship Allãh, being sincere to Him in religion* (39:2). *Now, surely, sincere religion is for Allãh* (alone), *and* (as for) *those who take guardians besides Him,* (saying): *We do not worship them save that they may make us nearer to Allãh, surely Allãh will judge between them in that in which they differ* (39:3).

Worship shall be a true worship when it is done with

pure intention, and this purity has been named as the presence of the worshipper. This will happen only when the attention of the worshipper is not fixed on anyone other than Allãh (otherwise, it would be polytheism); and when his aim of worship is not any other hope or fear like that of the paradise or the hell (otherwise, the worship would not be purely for Allãh). Moreover, he should not be concerned with his own self, as it would tantamount to egotism and arrogance, completely opposite of submission and servitude. Probably the plural pronoun — "we" worship — points to this fact; it negates the individuality of the worshipper as he includes himself in a multitude of people; it removes egotism, creates humility, and effaces the tendency of self-importance.

The declaration of one's servitude with the words, "Thee do we worship", is free from all defects, so far as its meaning and purity are concerned. Yet, as the servant describes the worship as his own act, it could create an impression that he thought to be independent in existence, power and will, while in fact he is only a slave and slave owns nothing. The second sentence, "and Thee do we beseech for help", removes this possible misunderstanding. It means: "We ascribe the worship to ourselves and make this claim only with Thy help; we are never independent of Thee. In other words, the complete verse, "Thee do we worship and Thee do we beseech for help", gives a single meaning, and that is "worship with purity of intention". Probably, that is why both sentences have the same style; otherwise, it could be said, 'Thee do we worship; help us and guide us . . .' The style has been changed in the next verse, "guide us . . ." and its reason will be explained later.

The above-given explanation makes it clear why the pronouns in this verse have been changed from the third to the second person; why the restrictive device of putting the object ("Thee") before the verb has been chosen; why the worship, in "do we worship", is used without any condition; why wor-

shipper includes others with him in this declaration of allegiance and worship; why the second sentence is needed after the first; and why both have the same construction and style.

The scholars have written other fine points about this verse; the reader is advised to refer to their books for this purpose; Allãh is the creditor whose debt can never be repaid.

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اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ـ ٠٦ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ الضَّالِّينَ ـ ٠٧

***Guide us to the straight path* (6), *the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not of those inflicted by Thy wrath, nor of those gone astray* (7).**

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COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *Guide us to the straight path. . . nor of those gone astray*: The meaning of "*al-hidãyah*" (اَلْهِدايَةُ = guidance, to guide) may easily be understood, if we consider first the significance of the "path" . "*aṣ-Ṣirãṭ*" (اَلصِّرَاطُ = path) is synonymous with *aṭ-ṭarīq* (اَلطَّرِيْقُ) and *as-sabīl* (اَلسَّبِيْلُ). In these verses, Allãh has commended the path that it is straight and that it is the path taken by those upon whom Allãh has bestowed His bounties and favours. It is this path guidance to which has been asked for. And it is the ultimate goal of the worship: The servant prays to his Lord that his worship, clean from all impurities, be performed in this path.

Allãh has mentioned in His Book that He has laid down a

path for man, nay, for all the creation, a path upon which they are proceeding. He says: *O man! surely thou art striving to thy Lord, a hard striving, until thou art to meet Him* (84:6); . . . *and to Him is the ultimate resort* (64:3); . . . *now surely to Allãh do all affairs eventually come* (42:53). There are many such verses, showing that all are proceeding on a prescribed road and that their destination is Allãh.

So far as the way is concerned, Allãh has said that there are two ways, not one: *Did I not enjoin on you, O children of Adam! that you should not worship the Satan? Surely he is your open enemy. And that you should worship Me*; *this is the straight path* (30:60-61). So, there is a straight path, and also there is another path. Again He has said: . . . *then verily I am near*; *I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me, that they may walk in the right way* (2:186); *Call upon Me, I will answer you. Verily, those who are arrogant to My worship shall soon enter hell, disgraced* (40:60). Obviously, Allãh is near to His servants, and the nearer path to Him is that of worship and prayer. Compare it with description of those who do not believe in Him: . . . *these shall be called to from a far-off place* (41:44). Obviously, the station of unbelievers is far-off place.

There are thus two ways to Allãh, a near one — the way of the believers — and a distant one, that of the others. It is the first difference between the ways.

Second difference: *Surely* (as for) *those who reject Our signs and turn away from them haughtily, the doors of heaven shall not be opened for them* (7:40). What is the function of a door? To let authorized people pass through it and bar the entry to unauthorized ones. The verse shows that there is a passage from the lower level to the upper heights. On the other hand, Allãh says: . . . *and to whomsoever My wrath descends he shall perish indeed* (20:81). The word translated here as "shall perish" literally means "shall fall down". Therefore, these is

another passage coming for the upper heights to the lower level. Also He says: . . . *and whoever adopts unbelief instead of faith, he indeed has gone astray from* (*i.e.,* has lost) *the right way* (2:108). Allãh uses the term "polytheism" for "going astray".[6] Accordingly, people are divided into three categories: First, those who proceed to the upper heights — those who believe in the signs of Allãh and are not arrogant to His worship. Second, those who fall down to the lower levels — they are those upon whom the wrath of Allãh has descended. Third, those who have gone astray from the right path; they are lost, wandering hither and thither. The last verse under discussion points to these three categories: "the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not of those inflicted by Thy wrath, nor of those gone astray."

Obviously, "the straight path" is separate from the last two paths. It is the path of the believers who are not arrogant. At the same time, the following verse shows that the straight path itself may be divided in various "traffic lanes", ways or branches: . . . *Allãh will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are given knowledge, in high degrees* . . . (58:11). This statement needs some elaboration:

Every straying is polytheism and vice versa, as may be inferred from the words of Allãh: . . . *and whoever adopts un-belief instead of faith, he indeed has gone astray from the right way* (2:108). The same is the theme of the verse: *Did not I en-join on you, O children of Adam! that you should not worship the Satan? Surely he is your open enemy. And that you should worship Me*; *this is the straight path. And certainly he has led astray a great multitude from among you* (36:60-62). Likewise, the Qur'ãn counts polytheism as injustice and vice versa, as may be seen in the words which the Satan shall utter after the judgement will be delivered against him and his followers: . . . *surely I disbelieved in your associating me with*

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[6] As may be seen in the verses 36:60 - 62, quoted above.

Allãh, before; *surely it is the unjust that shall have the painful punishment* (14:22). Then it counts injustice as straying: *Those who believe and do not mix up their faith with injustice, those are they who shall have the security and they are those who shall be guided aright* (6:82). It should be noted that they shall be guided aright and shall have security against straying or its resulting punishment only if they do not mix their faith with injustice and inequity.

It is clear from looking at these verses together that going stray, polytheism and inequity all have the same effect; all three are adjunct to each other. That is why it is said that each of them is indentifiable by the other two. For all practical purposes the three are one and the same, although they may be different in their literal meaning.

The straight path, then, is different from that of those who have gone astray; it is a path which is far away from polytheism and injustice. There can be no straying in this path — neither in hidden ideas and beliefs (for example, the disbelief or the thoughts disapproved by Allãh); nor in open actions or omissions (like committing a sin or omitting a good deed). It is the true mono-theism in belief and in deeds. And what is there after the truth but error? The above-mentioned verse 6: 82, fits on it completely. That verse guarantees security in the way and promises perfect guidance. The promise is inferred from the fact that the original word translated as "guided aright" is noun-agent, and the grammarians say that such a noun is really made for future. This is one feature of the straight path.

Allãh has identified those bestowed with divine favours, in the verse: And whoever obeys Allãh and the Apostle, these are with those upon whom Allãh has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the martyrs and the righteous ones; and excellent are these as companions (4:69). The belief and the obedience have been explained shortly before it in these words: But no! by your Lord! they do not

believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then they do not find any straitness in their selves as to what you have decided, and submit with total submission. And if We had prescribed for them: Kill yourselves or go forth from your homes, they would not have done it except a few of them; and if they had done what they were admonished, it would have certainly been better for them and most efficacious in strengthening (them) (4:65 - 66). Those who truly believe are really strong in their servitude and submission, in words and in deeds; in appearance and in secret. Yet such perfect believers shall be placed in a rank behind those upon whom Allãh has bestowed favours; that is why Allãh has said, "these are with those . . ." and not, among those'. They shall be with them, but not of them. It is further strengthened by the last sentence, "and excellent are these as companions". Companions are other than the self.

There is another, somewhat similar, verse in fifty-seventh chapter: *and* (as for) *those who believe in Allãh and His apostles, these it is that are the truthful and the martyrs with their Lord*; *they shall have their reward and their light . . .* (57:19). The believers, thus, shall be included in the ranks of the martyrs and the truthful — in the life hereafter. The fact that it will happen in the next world is inferred from the words, "with their Lord", and "they shall have their reward".

Those bestowed with divine- favours who are the people of the straight path — with whose relationship the straight path is identified — have greater prestige and higher rank than these believers who have cleansed their beliefs and actions from straying, polytheism and injustice. Pondering on these verses together, one feels sure that this group of the believers (with this quality) still continues; it has not come to its end. Had this group completed its term, it would have been counted among (and not, "with") those bestowed with favours; these believers would have gone up and instead of being with those

bestowed with favours, would have become part of them. They probably are among those who have been given knowledge from Allãh, as He says: *Allãh will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are given know-ledge, in high degrees* (58:11).

The people of the straight path are bestowed with excellent bounties that are more precious than that of the complete faith and perfect belief. This is the second feature of the straight path.

Allãh repeatedly mentions *aṣ-ṣirãt* (path) and *as-sabīl* (way) in the Qur'ãn; but He has never attributed to Himself except one straight path; although He attributes several ways to Himself. *And* (as for) *those who strive hard for Us. We will most certainly guide them onto Our ways* (29:69).

Likewise, He has never ascribed "the straight path" to any of his servants, the only exception being this verse under discussion which ascribes it to those who are bestowed with divine favours; but He frequently attributes "the way" to one or the other of His chosen servants: *Say*: *"This is my way*; *I invite you unto Allãh*; *with clear sight* (are) *I and he who follows me*" (12:108)*; . . . and follow the way of him who turns to Me* (31:15); . . . *the way of the believers. . .* (4:115). It is an indication that "the way" is other than "the straight path". There may be various and different ways taken by various chosen servants proceeding on the way of worship and submission; but "the straight path" is only one, as Allãh points to it in these words: *Indeed, there has come to you a light and a clear Book from Allãh*; *with it Allãh guides him who follows His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His permission and guides them to the straight path* (5:15-16). See, how the verse refers to "the ways" (in plural), and to "the straight path" (in singular). Now, there may be two explanations for it. Either "the straight path" is the same thing as "the ways", or "the ways" on going further join together and then merge

into the straight path.

There is another difference between the straight path and the way. Allãh says: *And most of them do not believe in Allãh without associating others* (with Him) (12:106). Note how the believers are said to associate others with Allãh. It shows that some sort of polytheism (that is, straying) may co-exist with belief (and the belief is a "way"); in other words the way may co-exist with polytheism. But the straight path cannot do so because it is not the path of those who have gone astray.

Each of these ways has some excellence or some deficiency — but not so the straight path. Each way is a part of the straight path, but is distinguished from the other ways. It may be inferred from the above-mentioned verses as well as from others. For example, Allãh says: *And that you worship Me*; *this is the straight path* (36:61); *Say*: *"Surely,* (*as* for) *me, my Lord has guided me to the straight path*; (to) *a most right religion, the faith of Ibrãḥīm the upright one*" (6:161). The worship and the religion are common to all the ways, and they are *also* "the straight path". The relation of the straight path to the ways of Allãh is that of the soul to the body. The body, during the life, undergoes countless changes, varies from day to day — from infancy to childhood; from adolescence to youth, from middle to old age and to senility. But the soul remains the same, and is always one with body at every stage. Sometimes, the body is inflicted with undesirable effects, which the soul would never accept, if left to itself. But the soul — the creation of Allãh, upon which He created the man — never deteriorates. Yet, in all these states, the body remains one with the soul. Likewise, the ways of Allãh are one with the straight path; but sometimes a way — the way of the believers, of the followers of the Prophet of those who turn towards Allãh or any other way — suffers from some kind of deterioration, although the straight path is immune from all defects and imperfections. You have seen how one of the ways, the belief, sometimes combines with polytheism and

straying, but the straight path does not do so. In short, the ways are of various grades — near or distant; safe or unsafe; clean or unclean — but all are in the straight path, or, let us say, are one with the straight path.

Allãh has mentioned this fact, in a parable of truth and falsehood, in these words: *He sends down water from the heaven, then the valleys flow according to their measure, and the torrent bears along the swelling foam*; *and from what they melt in the fire for the sake of* (making) *ornaments or apparatus arises a scum like it*; *thus does Allãh compare truth and falsehood*; *then as for the scum, it passes away as a worthless thing*; *and as for that which profits the people, it remains in the earth*; *thus does Allãh set forth parables* (13:17). It clearly shows that the hearts and mind differ in their abilities and capacities to receive the divine knowledge and spiritual perfection, although all partake of the same divine sustenance. (Its full explanation will be written in the ch. 13).

This was, however, the third feature of the straight path.

From the above analysis it may be seen that the straight path is a sort of controller of all the ways leading to Allãh. We may say that a way leading to Allãh leads a man to Him as long as it remains one with the straight path; but the straight path leads to Allãh unconditionally, without any if or but. That is why Allãh has named it "*aṣ-ṣirsãṭu 'l-mustaqīm*" (اَلصِّرَاطُ اَلْمُسْتَقِيْمُ = the straight path). *aṣ-Ṣirãṭ* means a clear path, and is derived from "*saraṭṭtu sarṭan*" (سَرَطتُّ سَرْطاً = I swallowed it completely); in other words, this clear path swallows its walkers without letting them go out. "*al-Mustaqīm*" (اَلْمُسْتَقِيْمُ = straight) literally means the one who stands on his legs, and has full control of himself as well as of the things attached to him. In other words, it is a thing which is not subjected to change or variation. Thus "*aṣ-ṣirãṭu 'l-mustaqīm*" = the straight path is the path which never fails to guide and to lead the walker to his destination.

Allãh says: *Then as for those who believe in Allãh and hold fast unto Him, soon will He admit them to Mercy from Him and* (His) *Grace, and guide them unto Himself* (by) *the straight path* (4:175). Obviously this guidance does not fail; it always succeeds. Also He has said: *Therefore* (for) *whomsoever Allãh intends that He would guide him aright, He expands his breast for Islam, and* (for) *whomsoever He intends that He should leave him to err, He makes his breast strait and narrow as though he were ascending into the sky*; *thus does Allãh lay uncleanliness on those who do not believe. And this is the path of your Lord,* (*a*) *straight* (path) (6:125-126). That is, this is Allãh's path that never changes, nor does it fail to reach its destination. Again He says: *He said*: *"This is a straight path with Me*; *surely as regards My servants, thou hast no authority over them except those who follow thee of the deviators*" (15:41-42). The verse declares that this is His settled course which never varies. In this way, it conveys the same idea which is contained in the verse: *For you shall not find any alteration in the course of Allãh*; *and you shall not find any change in the course of Allãh* (35:43).

The above-mentioned discourse has made the following points clear:

First: There are various ways to Allãh, each differing with others in perfection, easiness and smoothness. It all depends on its nearness or remoteness from the basic reality, from the straight path, like the way of submission, of faith, of worship, of purity of intention or of humility before Allãh. Some of the ways leading to the opposite direction are disbelief, polytheism, infidelity, exceeding the bounds, committing sins etc. Allãh has said: *And for all are grades according to what they did, and so that He may pay them back fully their deeds and they shall not be dealt with unjustly* (46:19).

The same is the case with the spiritual knowledge which the human mind receives from Allãh. They vary

according to mental and spiritual capacity of the receivers, and are tinted by colours of visions of the beholders. This fact is shown in the Qur'ãnic parable mentioned earlier: *He sends down water from the heaven, then the valleys flow according to their measure* . . . (13:17).

Second: The straight path controls all the ways. Likewise, the people of the straight path (who have been firmly established in it by Allãh) do enjoy complete authority to guide the other servants of Allãh. Allãh says: . . . *and excellent are these ascompanions* (4:69)*; Verily, your only Master is Allãh and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayer and pay zakãt while they are bowing down* (5:55). The last mentioned verse was revealed about `Ali, the Leader of the faithful (a.s.), as *al - mutawãtir* traditions say; and he (peace be on him) was the first to open this door in Islam. More details of it will be given in the fifth chapter.

Third: The import of the guidance to the way depends on the meaning of the way itself. *al-Hidãyah* (اَلْهِدايَةُ) means to guide, to lead; it accepts two objects, either without any preposition (as in the language of Ḥijãz) or with *ilã* (اِلٰى = to) before the second object (as in the language of other tribes). This detail has been given in *aṣ-Ṣiḥãḥ* of al-Jawharī, and obviously it is correct.

Before going further, a mistaken notion should be removed. Some people think that the meaning of guidance changes, depending on whether its second object is preceded by the preposition '*ila*' or not. If there is no such preposition, then according to them, guidance means "to convey to the destination"; if it is preceded by then it denotes "to show the path". In evidence, they offer the following verses: *Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allãh guides whom He pleases* (28:56). This verse, in which the verbs, "cannot guide" and "guides", have been used without preposition, says that the Prophet could not guide whom he pleased. But it is known

that he, throughout his life, guided the people, that is, showed them the path of Allãh. There-fore, what has been negated must be the other meaning. What the verse, then, says is this: you cannot convey to the spiritual goal whom you please; but it is Allãh who conveys to that destination whom He pleases. This difference in meaning is more clearly seen in the verses: *And We would certainly have guided them in the right path* (4:68). The verb (in the Arabic text) has been used without any preposition and it refers to the divine guidance — that is, conveyance to destination. And Allãh addresses the Prophet in these words: *and most surely you guide to the right path* (42:52). Here the verb is followed by *ilã* and the sentence attributes to the Prophet the task of guidance, in the meaning of showing the way. According to their reasoning the three verses put together show that when guidance is used in the meaning of "conveying to destination", its second object accepts no preposition; when it is used for "showing the path", the said object is preceded by *ilã.*

But this notion is not supported by the Qur'ãn. Allãh quotes the believer of the people of Pharaoh as saying: "*O my people! follow me, I will guide you to the right course*" (40:38). Here the Arabic text has no preposition and yet it does not mean conveying to destination, it only denotes showing the way.

What has been mentioned in the verse 28:56 (*Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allãh guides whom He pleases*) is the reality or perfection of guidance. The verse shows that the Prophet could not bestow on his people the perfect guidance, the reality of guidance, as it was a task that Allãh has reserved for Himself.

In short, the meaning of guidance does not depend on preposition *ilã* coming or not coming before the second object. In both cases the meaning is the same.

al-Hidãyah means to guide, to show the destination by showing the way, or, let us say, to convey to the destination.

Guidance, in reality, is reserved for Allãh, and He guides His servants by creating such causes that point the destination to them and lead them to their spiritual goal. Allãh says: *Therefore* (for) *whomsoever Allãh intends that He would guide him aright, He expands his breast for Islam* (6:125); . . . *then their skins and their hearts become pliant to the remembrance of Allãh*; *this is Allãh's guidance, He guides with it whom He pleases* (39:23). The verb "become pliant" is followed by the preposition "to", giving the verb a shade of meaning of inclination and repose. Guidance, thus, means that Allãh creates in the heart an aptitude by which it initiates, accepts, inclines towards and becomes serene in the remembrance of Allãh.

It has been mentioned earlier that there are many ways leading to Allãh. Consequently, guidance for one way would differ from those of the others. Each way has a special guidance of its own. This variation has been hinted at in the verse: *And* (as for) *those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them unto Our ways*; *and Allãh is most surely with the doers of good* (29:69). A man strives "in the way of Allãh"; and another strives "for Allãh". There is a great difference between the two. The first tries to keep the way safe and free from all dangers and blockades; the second's attention is fixed on Allãh only. It is this man who is praised in this verse — he strives hard for Allãh; thereupon Allãh helps him and guides him on the way most suited to his ability and power; and thereafter keeps guiding him from one way to another until He exclusively attaches him to Himself.

Fourth: The straight path is preserved in the ways of Allãh — the ways that are of various grades and levels. Allãh guides man to it; and the man is thus guided aright. As mentioned above, Allãh may keep guiding a man from one way to the other which is of a higher grade, and then to a third one still higher. The prayer in this verse, "Guide us to the straight path" (revealed on behalf of those whom Allãh has already guided to His worship) points to this very fact. If we

keep this point in view, there would be no room for an objection like the following: The one who utters this prayer is already guided aright — how can he pray afresh for guidance? It would be an attempt to re-obtain a thing which is already in hand, and it is just impossible. Also, the worshipper is already on the straight path — how can he pray to be guided again to the same path? Isn't it an impossibility?

But the explanation given by us clears away the mist of such objections.

Another objection: Our Law is the most perfect and most comprehensive of all the laws sent by Allãh since the dawn of humanity. Why should we ask from Allãh to guide us to the path of those of the previous people upon whom He had bestowed favours?

Reply: Admittedly, the Law brought by Muhammad (s. a. w.a.) is more perfect than any other one. But it does not necessarily mean that all those who follow this Law are more perfect than all those who followed the previous laws. An average follower of the Law of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) cannot surpass Nũh or Ibrãḥīm (a.s.), although their laws were sent long before the Islamic Law. It is one thing to accept and follow a law; it is quite another to get spiritual perfection by total submission — by perfectly moulding oneself in that law's pattern. A believer of previous nations who attained a high spiritual level, who became a mirror of divine attributes, is most certainly better than, and superior to, a follower of this law who did not reach that state — even though the latter would be following the most perfect and comprehensive law, that is, the Law of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). Therefore, it is quite in order for a believer of lower grade (although he may follow a perfect law) to pray to Allãh to help him reach the level of a believer of higher grade (although he might have followed a less perfect law).

An exegete has replied to the above-mentioned objection

in a way that is not free from defects. He has said: The religion of Allãh is one, and that is Islam. The fundamental truths — the belief in One God, the Prophethood and the Day of Judgement and all that results from this belief — are the same in all the laws and revelations sent by Allãh. The Law of Islam has an added distinction, in that it covers all aspects of human life and is, thus, the most comprehensive one. It looks more properly after public welfare. Moreover, its foundation is laid on reasoning — in all its forms: The logic, the admonition and the goodly argumentation. All divine religions are, thus, the same and the fundamental truths are common to all. The previous people have preceded us in this path. Therefore, Allãh has ordered us to look into their affairs, to take lessons from them and to follow them to spiritual perfection.

The author says: The principle upon which this reply is based is against the principles that guide us in exegesis of the Qur'ãn. The reply assumes that the realities of fundamental truths are on the same level in all the religions; that there is no difference in their grades; that the spiritual perfections and religious virtues are of the same quality everywhere. According to this view, the highest ranking prophet is equal to the lowest type of believer in his existence and natural perfection — so far as his creation is concerned. The difference, if any, is based on the subjective outlook of *sharī`ah,* not on any matter of creation. In their opinion, this case is similar to that of a king *vis-à-vis* his subjects — they are not different in their human existence, the difference is in their subjective and assumed positions only which are laid down by people and which do not have any in-dependent existence.

This thinking, in its turn, is based on the theory of material-ism, which teaches that nothing exists but matter; metaphysical "things" have no existence at all (or, at least, we are not in a position to know that they exist). The only exception is God, and we believe in His existence because of

logical evidence.

Those who accepted this view did so because, coming under the influence of natural sciences, they put all their confidence in their five senses. Or because they thought that "commonsense" was enough for explaining the divine words, and therefore, neglected to meditate on the Qur'ãn.

God willing, we shall throw more light on this subject at some other place.

Fifth: The people of the straight path are higher in rank than others, and their path is superior to the others' ways. It is because of their knowledge, and not because of their virtuous deeds. They have that knowledge of divine attributes which is hidden from others. (We have explained earlier that perfection of virtuous deeds is found in some of the inferior ways also. Therefore, deeds cannot be the criterion by which the people of the straight path are given excellence over the rest.) The question arises as to what is that knowledge and how it is acquired. We shall deal with these questions when we shall explain the verse 13:17 (*He sends down water from the heaven, then the valleys flow according to their measure*).

The following verses too point to this fact: *Allãh will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are given knowledge in higher degrees* (58:11); *To Him do ascend the good words*; *and the good deed lifts them up* (35:10). What ascends to Allãh is the good words, that is, true belief and knowledge; good deeds lift up the good words and help them in their ascension, without themselves going up. We shall fully discuss this verse when we shall reach it.

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said about the meaning of worship:

“Worship is of three kinds: some people worship Allãh, because they fear Him — so it is the worship of slaves; and a group worships Allãh, Blessed and High is He, to seek reward — so it is the worship of hirelings; and a group worships Allãh, Mighty and Great is He, because of (His) love — and this is the worship of noble persons, and it is the most excellent worship.” (*al-Kãfi*)

Verily, some people worshipped Allãh being desirous (of His reward) — so this is the worship of traders; and some people worshipped Allãh fearing (His punishment) — so it is the worship of slaves, and a group worshipped Allãh in gratitude (to Him) — so this is the worship of noble men. (*Nahju 'l-balãghah*)

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “Verily people worship Allãh in three ways: One group worships Him in desire of His reward, and it is the worship of covetous ones, and it is greed; and others worship Him in dread of the Fire, and it is the worship of slaves, and it is fear; but I worship Him in His love — Mighty and Great is He — and this is the worship of noble ones. (It is) because Allãh has said: *and they shall be secure from terror on that days* (27:89); and He has said, *Say*: *`If you love Allãh, then follow me, Allãh will love you . . .'* (3:31). Therefore, whosoever is loved by Allãh, he shall be among the secure ones; and it is a hidden position, cannot touch it save the purified ones.” (*al-‘ilal, al-Majãlis* and *al-Khiṣãl*)

The author says: The meaning of these traditions may be understood from the preceding commentary. The Imãms (of *Ahlu 'l-bayt*) have variously attributed the worship of the noble ones sometimes to gratitude and sometimes to love, because in final analysis both are one and the same. Gratitude and thank means putting the received bounty in its proper place. It is the thank of worship that it should be addressed to Allãh, as only He, Himself, deserves to be worshipped. Allãh is worshipped because He is Allãh, that is,

because He alone holds all attributes of beauty and glory. He, of all things, is Beautiful; He alone is loved for Himself. What is love? It is inclination and attraction towards beauty. We say: He is worshipped because He is He; We may express the same idea if we say: He is worshipped because He is beautiful and beloved. Again, the same theme may be explained by saying that He is worshipped because He is the Bestower of favours and is thanked through worship. All three expressions carry the same import.

It has been narrated through Sunni chains that aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) explained the verse, "Thee do we worship . . ." in these words: "We do not ask from Thee other than Thee, and we do not worship Thee by substitute and replacement, as do those who are ignorant of Thee, removed from Thee."

The author says: This tradition points to what has been explained in the commentary that worship demands presence (of heart) and purity (of intention) which does not allow diversion to any substitute, to anything else.

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said *inter alia* in a tradition: "And whosoever thinks that he worships (Allãh) by (His) attributes without being conscious of Him, he refers (his worship) to an absent one; and whosoever thinks that he worships the attribute and the person (having that attribute) he nullifies monotheism, because the attribute is other than the person; and whosoever thinks that he ascribes the person to the attribute, he belittles the Great One, `and they do not assign to Allãh His proper prestige . . .' " (*Tuhafu 'l- `uqul*)

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) explained the verse: *Guide us to the straight path,* in these words: "Guide us to adhere to the path that leads to Thy love, and conveys to Thy Garden, (the path that) prevents us from following our desires (lest we be ruined) and from adhering to our opinions (lest we be

destroyed). (*Ma`ani 'l-akhbãr*)

The same book quotes Ali (a.s.) as saying about this verse: “Continue for us Thy help with which we obeyed Thee in our past days, so that we continue to obey Thee in our coming days also.”

The author says: The two traditions point to two aspects of the reply of the previously mentioned objection — that the prayer for guidance, addressed by a person already guided aright, is trying to obtain a thing in hand, and that it was asking for impossible. The first tradition looks at the difference in the grades of guidance, and the second looks at oneness of guidance in its reality.

Again *Ma`ãni 'l-akhbãr* quotes Ali (a.s.) as saying: “The straight path, in this world, is that which stops short of excesses and rises above shortcomings, and remains straight; and, in the next world, it is the path of the believers (leading them) to the Garden."

The same book quotes the same Imãm, explaining the verse: *The path of those. . .,* as follows: “Say: Guide us to the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours by strengthening them for Thy religion and Thy obedience — not (of those whom Thou favoured) with wealth and health because such things are sometimes given even to the disbelievers or to the sinful.” (Then he said:) “And those (bestowed with divine favour) are those about whom Allãh says: *And whoever obeys Allãh and the Apostle, these are with those upon whom Allãh has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the martyrs and the righteous ones, and excellent are these as companions* (4:69).

ar-Riḍã (as.) narrates through his forefathers from Amīr al-mu'minīn (a.s.) that he said: “I heard the Apostle of Allãh saying: `Allãh, Mighty and Great is He, has said: “I have divided the Opening of the Book between Myself and My servant; so, its half is for Me and the (other) half is for My

servant. And My servant shall get what he asks for.” When the servant says: *In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful,* Allãh, Great is His Glory, says: “My servant has started with My name, and it is incumbent upon Me that I should complete his works for him and bless him in his affairs.” And when he says: *All praise is due to Allãh, the Lord of the worlds,* Allãh, Great is His Glory, says: “My servant has praised Me, and he knows that the bounties that are with him are from Me, and that the misfortunates that have been averted from him were so averted by My grace; (O My angels!) I appoint you as My witnesses that I shall add for him the favours of the next world to those of this world, and will avert from him the calamities of the next world as I have averted from him the calamities of this world.” And when he says, *The Beneficent, the Merciful,* Allãh, Great is His Glory, says: “My servant bore witness for Me that I am the Beneficent, the Merciful; I make you My witness that I will most surely augment his share in My mercy, and I will most certainly increase his portion in My bounties.” And when he says, *The Master of the Day of Judgement,* Allãh, the High, says: “I make you My witness that, as he has acknowledged that I am the Master of the Day of Judgement, I will most certainly make his reckoning easier (for him) on the Day of Reckoning, and I will most certainly accept his good deeds, and look over his sins.” And when he says: *Thee do we worship,* Allãh, Mighty and Great is He, says: “My servant is telling truth, He worships Me only. Be My witness that I will most surely give him for his worship a reward that will be the (object of) envy to all who opposed him when he worshipped Me.” And when he says, *and Thee do we beseech for help,* Allãh, the High, says: “From Me has My servant sought help, and in Me has he taken refuge. Be My witness that I will most certainly help him in his affairs, and will aid him in his difficulties, and will take his hand in his calamities.” And when he says, *Guide us to the right path . .* Allãh, Mighty and Great is He, says: “This (part) is for My servant, and My

servant shall have what he asks for; and I have answered (the prayer of) My servant, and have given him what he hopes for and have protected him from what he is afraid of."'"(*'Uyũnu 'l-akhbãr*).

The author says: aṣ-Ṣadũq has narrated in '*Ilalu 'sh-sharã'i',* an almost similar tradition from ar-Riḍa (a.s.). The tradition explains the chapter of The Opening in the frame of the daily prayer. It further confirms the previously mentioned fact that this divine revelation has been sent, as though on behalf of the servants of Allãh, to teach them the manners of servitude; to show them how to praise their Lord and how to declare their allegiance to Him. It is a chapter made especially for the purpose of worship; and no other chapter comes near to it in this respect. For example:-

1. The entire chapter is a divine speech, revealed on behalf of His servant, so that he may recite it when he stands to worship his Lord.

2. It is divided in two parts: one for Allãh and the other for the servant.

3. It contains, in spite of its brevity, all the Qur'ãnic wisdom. The Qur'ãn is a vast treasure of fundamental truths, moral values and the most comprehensive *sharī`ah* which consists of the rules of worship and mutual dealings, as well as the penal and civil codes. Further it is a valuable mine of divine promises and threats, stories of_ previous peoples as well as parables and moral lessons. But, in spite of this wide scope, all its teachings may be returned to four fundamental truths: the Oneness of God, the prophet-hood, the resurrection (with all its details) and the guidance of mankind to its bliss in this world as well as in the next. Needless to reiterate that this chapter contains all these basic realities in these very short, and at the same time very eloquent, sentence.

It will not be out of place to compare the beauty, glory and spirituality of this chapter, used in the Muslims' prayers,

with the Lord's prayer, used by the Christians in their prayer:

Our Father which art in heaven Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matthews 6:9 - 1 3)

Ponder deeply on the teachings contained in these sentences, supposed to be of divine revelation, and see what manners of servitude does this prayer teach. First it tells them that their Father (i.e. God, in their terminology) is in heaven. Then it prays about the Father that His name be hallowed, His kingdom come and His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. The question is: Who will fulfil these wishes which look more like political slogans than spiritual invocation. Then it makes them ask for their daily bread, and for His forgiveness in lieu of their forgiveness — that He should waive His rights as they have waived theirs. But what right do they possess except that which they have been given by God Himself? Then they beseech Him not to lead them into temptation but to deliver them from evil. This is asking for impossible, because this world is the place appointed for our test and trial, so that we may acquire spiritual perfection. Would not salvation lose its meaning, if there was no test and trial?

And yet some orientalists have temerity to write: “Islam does not have any superiority over other religions, so far as spiritual knowledge is concerned, because all divine religions invite the men to the belief in one God, and ask them to purify them-selves by good character and virtuous deeds. The religions excel one another only in deep -rootedness of their social fruits.”

OTHER TRADITIONS

It is narrated in *Man lã yaḥḍuruhu 'l-faqīh* and *at-Tafsīr* of al - `Ayyãshī that aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "The straight path is Amīru 'l-mu'minīn (a.s.)."

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "(The straight path) is the path to the knowledge of Allãh. And there are two paths, one in this world and the other in the next. As for the path in this world, it is the Imãm whose obedience is obligatory; whosoever knows him in this world and follows his guidance, he shall proceed on the path which is the bridge over the hell in the next world; and whosoever does not know him in this world, his foot shall slip (over that bridge) in the next world, and he shall fall down into the fire of the hell." (*Ma'ãni 'l-akhbãr*)

The same book quotes as-Sajjãd (a.s.) as saying: "There is no curtain between Allãh and His proof, nor is there any screen for Allãh against His proof. We are the gates of Allãh, and we are the straight path, and we are the (treasure) chest of His Knowledge, and we are the interpreters of His revelation, and we are the pillars of His Oneness, and we are the place of His secret."

Ibn Shahrãshũb has quoted from *at-Tafsīr* of Wakī' ibn al-Jarrãh from ath-Thawri from as-Suddī from Asbãṭ and Mujãhid from Ibn `Abbãs that he said about the verse: *Guide us to the straight path*: "Say O group of the servants (of Allãh): Lead us to the love of Muhammad (s. a. w. a.) and his family-members."

The author says: There are other traditions of the same meaning. Such traditions are based on the "flow" of the Qur'ãn, that is, application of the Qur'ãn wherever it is applicable. It should be noted that the term, "flow" — and it will often be used in this book — has been taken from the

traditions of the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (a.s.):-
al-Fuḍayl ibn Yasãr said: "I asked Abu Ja'far (a.s.) about the tradition, 'There is no verse in the Qur'ãn but it has an exterior and an interior, and there is no word in it but it has a boundary, and every boundary has a watching place.' (I asked him) what was the meaning of exterior and interior. The Imãm said: 'Its exterior is its revelation and its interior is its interpretation; some of it has already passed (i.e. happened) and some of it has not come about yet; it runs along (or flows) as run the sun and the moon; when a thing of it comes (to its appointed place and time) it happens . . . (*at-Tafsīr,* of al-'Ayyãshi)

This theme is found in other traditions too. It is the convention of the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (a.s.) that they apply a Qur'ãnic verse to all things it may be applied to. And this convention was correct and reasonable, because the Qur'ãn was revealed as a "guidance to the worlds"; it guides the mankind to correct belief, correct ethics and correct action. The matter of belief that it has explained is eternal truth; it is not limited to a certain time or certain place. The virtue or vice and the rules laid down for them are not confined to one person or one period — they are general and applicable to all relevant persons and times. The traditions explaining the background of revelation of a certain verse — when, why and about whom or what was it revealed — do not affect its general import. The rule is not restricted to that particular person or event; otherwise, it would cease to be valid in other similar conditions, and would die with the death of that person. The Qur'ãnic declaration is general. If it praises some persons, or condemns some others, it is because of the presence of good or evil characteristics in them. And wherever those good or evil characteristics are found, even in later generations, the verse will in all truth be applied to them. The Qur'ãn itself proves it, as Allãh says: *With it* (*i.e.,* the Qur'ãn) *Allãh guides him who follows His pleasure into the ways of safety* . . . (5:16); . . . *and most surely it is a Mighty Book,*

falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it (41:41-42); *Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian* (15:9).

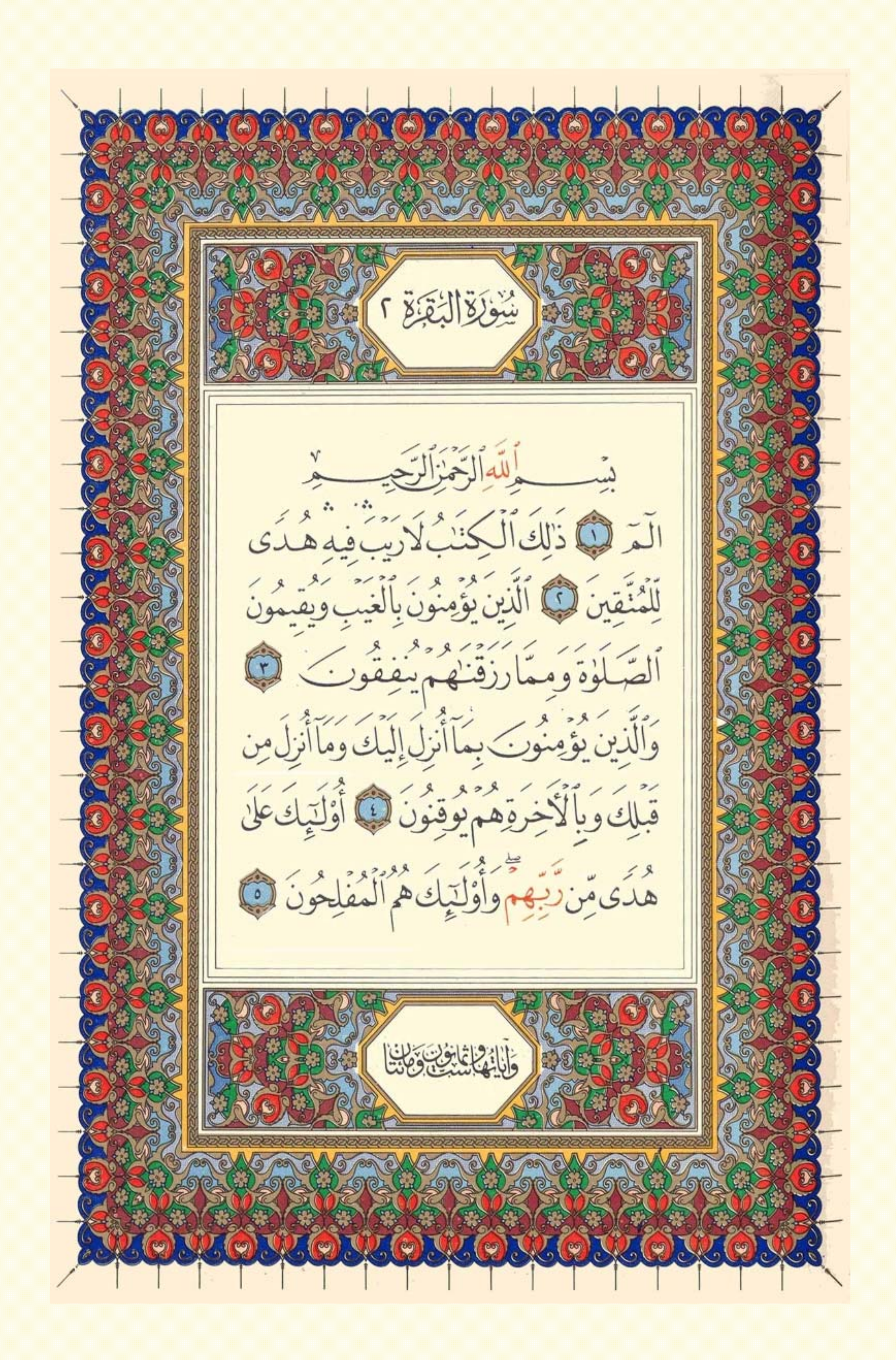
There are numerous traditions, perhaps reaching to hundreds, which apply various verses of the Qur'ãn to the Imãms or to their enemies. They are called the traditions of "flow". But now that the general principle has been explained, we shall not include those traditions in this book — except where it becomes necessary for the explanation of a verse or for some reasoning or discussion.

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Chapter Two

al Bagarah (The Cow)

286 verses - Medina



سُورَةُ ٱلبَقَرَةِ ٢

بِسۡمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓ ١ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡكِتَٰبُ لَا رَيۡبَۛ فِيهِۛ هُدٗى
لِّلۡمُتَّقِينَ ٢ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقۡنَٰهُمۡ يُنفِقُونَ ٣
وَٱلَّذِينَ يُؤۡمِنُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيۡكَ وَمَآ أُنزِلَ مِن
قَبۡلِكَ وَبِٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ هُمۡ يُوقِنُونَ ٤ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ عَلَىٰ
هُدٗى مِّن رَّبِّهِمۡۖ وَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُفۡلِحُونَ ٥

وَآيَاتُهَا سِتٌّ وَثَمَانُونَ وَمِائَتَان

In the name of Allãh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

***Alif lãm mīm* (1). *This Book, there is no doubt in it,* (*is*) *a guidance to those who guard* (against evil) (2), *Those who believe in the unseen and keep up the prayer and spend* (benevolently) *out of what We have given them* (3), *And who believe in that which has been sent down to thee and that which was sent down before thee and they are sure of the hereafter* (4). *These are on a guidance from their Lord and these it is that shall be the successful ones* (5).**

* * * * *

GENERAL COMMENT

This chapter was revealed piecemeal; therefore, it does not have a single theme. However a major part of it shows a general objective: It emphasizes that a man cannot be a true servant of Allãh unless he believes in all that was revealed to

the apostles of Allãh without making any difference between revelation and revelation, or between apostle and apostle; accordingly, it admonishes and condemns the disbelievers, the hypocrites and the people of the book because they differed about the religion of Allãh and differentiated between His apostles; thereafter it ordains various important laws, like change of the direction to which the Muslims were to turn for their prayers, regulations of *hall,* inheritance and fasting and so on.

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *Alif lãm mīm*: God willing, we shall describe in the 42nd chapter some things related to the "letter-symbols" that come at the beginning of some chapters. Also, the meaning of the guidance of the Qur'ãn and of its being a book will be explained later on.

QUR'ÃN: *This Book, there is no doubt in it,* (is) *a guidance to those who guard* (against evil), *those who believe in the unseen*: Those who guard against evil, or in other words, the pious ones, are the very people who believe. Piety, or guarding oneself against evil, is not a special virtue of any particular group of the believers. It is not like doing good, being humble before God or purity of intention, which are counted as various grades of the faith. Piety, on the other hand, is a comprehensive virtue that runs through all the ranks of the true faith. It is for this reason that Allãh has not reserved this adjective for any particular group of the believers.

The characteristics of piety, enumerated in these four verses, are five: Believing in the unseen, keeping up prayers, spending benevolently out of what Allãh has given, believing in

what Allãh has revealed to His apostles, and being sure of the hereafter. The pious ones acquire these spiritual qualities by a guidance from Allãh, as Allãh tells us in the next verse: “These are on a guidance from their Lord ". They became pious and guarded themselves against evil because Allãh had guided them to it. When they got that quality, the Qur’ãn became a guidance for them: “This Book . . . (is) a guidance to those who guard against evil”.

It clearly shows that there are two guidances, one before they became pious, the other after it. The first guidance made them pious; and thereupon Allãh raised their status by the guidance of His Book.

The contrast is thus made clear between the pious ones on one hand and the disbelievers and the hypocrites (who are admonished in the next fifteen verses) on the other. The later two groups are surrounded by two strayings and two blindnesses. Their first straying causes their unbelief and hypocrisy, and the second one (which comes after their unbelief and hypocrisy) confirms their first error and strengthens it. Look at what Allãh says about the disbelievers: *Allãh has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing*; *and there is a covering over their eyes* (2:7). Sealing their hearts has been ascribed to Allãh, but the covering over their eyes was put by the disbelievers themselves. Likewise, Allãh says about the hypocrites: *There is a disease in their hearts, so Allãh added to their disease* (2:10). The first disease is attributed to the hypocrites themselves, and the second one to Allãh. The same reality has been explained in many verses. For example: *He causes many to err by it and many He leads aright by it! But He does not cause to err by it* (*any*) *except the transgressors* (2:26); . . . *but when they turned aside, Allãh made their hearts turn aside* (61:5).

In short, the pious ones are surrounded by two guidances, as the disbelievers and hypocrites fall between two errors.
The second guidance is by the Qur’ãn; therefore, the first one must have been before the Qur’ãn. They must have been guided by a healthy and unimpaired psychology. If a man's nature is

faultless and flawless, it cannot fail to see that it is dependent on some thing above it. Also, it realizes that every other thing, which it may perceive, imagine or understand, depends likewise on a thing outside the chain of dependent and needy things. Thus, it comes to believe that there must be a Being, unseen and unperceptible through the senses, who is the beginning and end of every other thing. It also sees that the said Essential Being does not neglect even the smallest detail when it comes to creative perfection of His creatures. This makes him realize that the said Creator cannot leave the man to wander aimlessly hither and thither in his life; that He must have provided for him a guidance to lead him aright in his actions and morals. By this healthy reasoning, the man acquires the belief in One God, in the institution of prophethood and in the Day of Resurrection. In this way, his faith in the fundamentals of religion becomes complete. That faith leads him to show his servitude before his Lord, and to use all that is in his power — wealth, prestige, knowledge, power, and any other excellence — to keep this faith alive and to convey it to others. Thus we come to the prayer and benevolent spending. The five virtues enumerated in these verses are such that a healthy nature unfailingly leads the man to them. Once a man reaches this stage, Allãh bestows on him His another grace, that is, the guidance by the Qur'ãn.

The above-mentioned five qualities — correct belief and correct deeds — fall between two guidances, a preceding one and a following one.

This second guidance is based on the first one. This fact has been described in the following verses:

> *Allãh confirms those who believe with the sure word in this world's life and in the hereafter* (14:27).
>
> *O you who believe! fear Allãh and believe in His apostle. He will give you two portions of His mercy, and make for you a light with which you will walk . . .* (57:28). *O you who believe! if you help Allãh, He will*

help you and make firm your feet (47:7).

And Allãh does not guide the unjust people (61:7).

. . . and Allãh does not guide the transgressing people (61:5).

The same is the case with error and straying of the disbelievers and hypocrites, as will be seen later on.

The above verses give an indication that man has another life, hidden behind this one. It is by that life that he lives in this world as well as after death and at resurrection. Allãh says: *Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth* . . .(6:122). We shall explain it, God willing, later on.

"Those who believe in the unseen": "*al-Imãn*" (اَلإِيْمانُ = faith, to believe) is consolidation of belief in heart. It is derived from *al-amn* (اَلأَمْنُ = safety, to feel safe). The believer, by his belief and faith, gains safety from doubts. (Needless to say that doubt is like a poison to the faith.)

It has already been explained that faith has many grades. Sometimes one is certain of the object of faith; and this certainty has its effects; at other times the certainty increases and includes some concomitants of the said object; and at times it increases to include all the related matters of the object of faith. Naturally, the belief, thus, is of various grades, and so are the believers. "*al-Ghayb*" (اَلْغَيْبُ = the unseen) is opposite of "the perceived". It is used for Allãh, and His great signs, including the revelation, which is referred to in the clause, "And who believe in that which has been sent down to thee and that which was sent down before thee". Also, it includes the hereafter. But in these verses, the beliefs in the revelation and in the hereafter have been separately mentioned. Therefore, "the unseen" must have been used for Allãh only. In this way the belief in the three fundamentals of religion

becomes complete.

The Qur'ãn emphasizes that man should not confine his knowledge and belief to only the perception; it exhorts him to follow healthy reasoning and rational understanding.

QUR'ÃN: *and they are sure of the hereafter*: Instead of only believing in the hereafter, they are sure of it. There is an indication here that one cannot be pious, cannot guard himself against evil, until he is really certain of the hereafter — a certainty that does not let him forget it even for a short time. A man believes in a matter, yet sometimes forgets some of its demands and then commits somethings contrary. But if he believes in, and is sure of, the day when he shall have to give account of all that he has done — big or small — he will not do anything against the divine law, will not commit any sin. Allãh says:. . . *and do not follow desire, lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allãh*; (as for) *those who go astray from the path of Allãh, for them surely is a severe punishment because they forgot the day of reckoning* (38:26). Clearly it is because of forgetting the Day of Reckoning that man goes astray. It follows that if one remembers it and is sure of it, he will surely guard himself against evil, will become pious.

QUR'ÃN: *These are on guidance from their Lord and these it is that shall be the successful ones*: Guidance is always from Allãh, it is not ascribed to anyone else except in a metaphorical way.

Allãh describes His guidance in these words: *Therefore* (for) *whomsoever Allãh intends that He would guide him aright, He expands his breast for Islam* . . . (6:125). If one's breast is expanded, he will be free from every tightness and niggardliness. And Allãh says that: . . . *whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones* (59:9). Therefore, He says in this verse about

those who are on His guidance that “they shall be the successful ones".

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh: *Those who believe in the unseen*: *“*Those who believe in the rising of *al-Qã'im* (اَلْقَآئِمُ = one who stands, i.e., al-Mahdi, the twelfth Imãm — a.s.) that it is truth.” (*Ma`ani 'l -akhbãr*)

The author says: This explanation is given in other traditions also; and it is based on the “flow” of the Qur’ãn.

According to *at-Tafsīr* of al-`Ayyãshi, aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh: *and spend* (benevolently) *out of what We have given them,* that it means: the knowledge We have given them.

In *Mã‘ãni 'l-akhbãr,* the same Imãm has explained it in these words: “And they spread the knowledge We have given them and they recite what We have taught them of the Qur’ãn.

The author says: Both traditions explain the “spending” in a wider sense that includes spending the wealth as well as using other bounties of Allãh in His cause; the explanation given by us earlier is based on this exegesis.

A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION

Should we rely on rational concepts, in addition to the things perceptible through the senses? It is a subject of great controversy among the western scholars of the later days. All Muslim philosophers as well as most of the western ones of ancient times believed that we can rely on the rational as well as the sensual perceptions. They were

rather of the opinion that an academic premises does not look at a tangible and sensual factor as such. But most of the modern scholars, especially the scientists, hold that nothing can be relied upon except what one perceives through the five senses. Their proof is as follows:

> Pure rational proofs often go wrong. There is no test or experiment, perceptible through the senses, to verify those rational proofs or their premises.
>
> Sensual perceptions are free from this defect; when we perceive a thing through a sense, we verify it through repeated tests and experiments; this testing continues till we are sure of the characteristics or properties of the object of test. Therefore, sensual perception is free from doubt, while rational proof is not.

But this argument has many flaws:-

First: All the above-mentioned premises are rational; they cannot be perceived by any of the five senses. In other words, these scholars are using rational premises, to prove that rational premises cannot be relied upon! What a paradox! If they succeed in proving their view-point through these premises, their very success would prove them wrong.

Second: Sensual perception is not less prone to error and mistake than rational proof. A cursory glance at the books dealing with the optics and other such subjects is enough to show how many errors are made by sight, hearing and other senses. If rational proof is unreliable because of its possible mistakes, sensual perception also should be discarded for the same reason.

Third: No doubt, there should be a way to distinguish the right perception from the wrong. But it is not the "repeated testing", *per se,* that creates that distinction in our mind. Rather, it becomes one of the premises of a rational proof which in turn provides that distinction. When we discover a property of an object, and the property remains the same

through repeated tests, a rational proof, on the following lines, is offered by our thinking power.

> If this property were not this thing's own property, it would not be found in it so unfailingly;
>
> But it is always found in it without fail;
>
> Therefore, it is its own property.

It is now obvious that sensual perception too depends on rational premises to finalize its findings.

Fourth: Let us admit that practically every sensual perception is supported by test. But is that test verified by another test? If yes, then the same question will arise about this later one. Obviously, it cannot go on *ad infinitum*; there must come at the end a test whose verification depends not on a visible test but on the above-mentioned rational proof. It means that one cannot rely on sensual perception without relying on ration-al concepts.

Fifth: The five senses cannot perceive absolute and major issues; they know only the particular and minor things. Knowledge depends on absolute issues, which cannot be tested in a laboratory nor can they be grasped by the five senses. A professor of anatomy operates upon, or dissects, a number of living or dead human bodies — it does not matter how large or small that number is. He finds that each of the bodies — which he has opened — has a heart, a liver and the like. And after looking at those particular cases, he feels bold enough to teach an absolute proposition that all men have a heart and a liver. The question is: Has he seen in-side "all" the human beings? If only that much can be relied upon which is perceived by the five senses, how can any absolute proposition of any branchof science be accepted as true?

The fact is that sensual perception and rational concept both have their place in the field of knowledge; both are complementary to each other. By rationality and understanding, we mean that faculty which is the source of

the above examples of absolute principles. Everyone knows that man has such a faculty. How can a faculty created by Allãh (or as they say, by nature) be always in wrong? How can it always fail in the function en-trusted to it by the Creator? The Creator never entrusts any work to an agent until He creates a connecting link between them.

So far as mistakes in rational and sensual faculties are concerned, the reader should look for it in related subjects like logic etc.

ANOTHER PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION

Man in his early childhood perceives the objects around him; he knows them without knowing that he knows, that is, without being aware that he has, or is using, a faculty called knowledge or cognition. This continues until a time comes when he finds himself doubting or presuming a thing. Then he realizes that before that he was using "knowledge" in his life affairs. He also gradually comes to understand that his perception or concepts are sometimes wrong, that error cannot be in the materials that he perceives — because those material things are facts and facts cannot be non-facts, that is, cannot be wrong. Therefore, the error must be in his perception. When there is no error in perception, it is knowledge — a perception that leaves no room for opposite ideas.

By these stages, he becomes aware of the basic principle that positive and negative are mutually exclusive and totally exhaustive; they are contradictories, they cannot both be present nor can both be absent. This fundamental truth is the foundation-stone of every self-evident or theoretical proposition. (Even if one doubts this statement, he intuitively knows that this "doubt" cannot be present with its negative, with its "non-doubt".)

Man relies on knowledge in every academic theory and

practical function. Even when he feels doubtful about a matter, he identifies that doubt by knowing that it is a doubt. The same applies when he does not know, or only presumes, or merely imagines a thing, he identifies it by the knowledge that it is ignorance, presumption or imagination.

But in ancient Greece, there arose a group, the Sophists, who denied existence of knowledge. They showed doubt in every thing, even in their own selves, even in that doubt. The Sceptics of later days are almost their successors. They deny knowledge of every thing outside their own selves and their own minds. Their "arguments" run as follows:

First: The most potent knowledge (that comes through the five senses) is often wrong and in error. Then how can one be sure of the knowledge obtained through other sources? How can we rely, in this background, on any knowledge or proposition outside our own selves?

Second: When we wish to comprehend any outside object, what we get is merely its knowledge; we do not grasp the object itself. Then, how can it be possible to grasp any object?

Reply to the First Argument: First: This argument negates and annihilates itself. If no proposition can be relied upon, how can one rely on the propositions and premises used in this argument? Second: To say that a source of knowledge is "often" wrong, is to admit that it is also correct many times. Then how can it be rejected totally? Third: We have never said that our knowledge is always correct. The Sophists and the Sceptics affirm that no knowledge is correct. To refute this universal negative proposition, a particular affirmative proposition is sufficient. That is, we have only to prove that some knowledge is correct; and we have done so in the second reply.

Reply to the Second Argument: The issue in dispute is knowledge, which means to unveil an object. The Sceptics admit that when they try to comprehend an object, they get

its know-ledge. Their only complaint is that they do not grasp the objectitself. But nobody has ever claimed that knowledge means grasping the object itself; our only claim is that knowledge unveils some of the realities of its object, that is, of the thing so known.

Moreover, the Sceptic refutes his own views practically in every movement and at every moment. He claims that he does not know anything outside his own self, outside his own mind. But when he is hungry or thirsty, he moves to the food or water; when he sees a wall falling down, he runs away from it. But he does not try to get food when he just thinks about hunger, and does not run away when he just thinks about a falling wall. It means that he does not act on the pictures in his mind — which he claims are the real things, and acts on that feeling or perception which comes to him from outside — which, according to him, does not have any reality and should not be relied upon!

There is another objection against existence of knowledge. They deny existence of established knowledge; and have laid the foundation of today's natural sciences on this rejection. Their reasoning is as follows:

Every single atom in this world is in constant movement; every single thing is continuously moving towards perfection or deterioration. In other words, what a thing was at a given instant, is not the same in the next. Understanding and perception is a function of brain. Therefore, it is a material property of a material compound. Naturally, this process too is governed by the laws of change and development. It means that all functions of brain, including knowledge, are constantly changing and developing. It is, therefore, wrong to say that there is any such thing as established knowledge. Whatever knowledge there is has only relative permanence — some propositions last longer than others: And it is this impermanent conception that is called knowledge.

Reply: This argument is based on the presumption that knowledge is not non-material and abstract; that it is a physical thing. But this supposition is neither self-evident nor proved.

Knowledge is certainly non-material and abstract. It is not a physical and material thing, because the attributes and properties of matter are not found in it:—

1. All material things are divisible; knowledge, *per se*, is not divisible.

2. Material things depend on space and time; knowledge, *per se, is* independent of space and time. An event happens in a certain place and time, but we may comprehend it in any place and at any time without any adverse effect on its comprehension.

3. Material things are admittedly governed by the law of general movement and constant change. But knowledge, *per se,* does not change. Knowledge, as knowledge, is incompatible with change, as one may understand after a little meditation.

4. Suppose that knowledge, *per se, is* subject to constant change like matter and material things. Then one thing or event could not be comprehended with the same details, in exactly the same way, at two different times. Nor could a past event be remembered correctly later on. Because, as the materialists have said, "what a (material) thing was at a given instant is not the same in the next".

These comparisons show that knowledge, as knowledge, is not a material or physical thing. It must be told here that we are not talking about the physical actions and reactions which an organ of a sense or the brain has to undergo in the process of acquiring knowledge. That action and reaction is a process, or a tool, of knowledge, it is not the knowledge itself.

For more detailed discussion of this subject one should study the philosophical works.

* * * * *

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ - ٦. خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ـــ ٧.

***Surely those who disbelieve, alike is it to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe* (6). *Allãh has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing*; *and there is a covering over their eyes*; *and for them is a great punishment* (7).**

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *Surely those who disbelieve . . . will not believe*: They were the people who obstinately clung to rejection of faith and in whose hearts disbelief had established deep roots. This may be inferred from the fact that warning them and not warning them was all alike to them; they would not move from their obduracy. Probably it refers to the disbelievers of Quraysh, who were the bitterest enemies of Islam and who did try their utmost to extinguish the light of faith; they persisted stubbornly in their enmity until Allãh destroyed them in Badr

and other battles. The sentence, "alike is it to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe", strengthens this interpretation; because it could not be applied to all the disbelievers of the world — otherwise the door of guidance would be closed. Also, this same sentence has come in Chapter of Yã Sīn (36:10) which is a Meccan chapter. Then it appears in this chapter that is the first chapter revealed at Medina. (It was revealed before the battle of Badr.) Therefore, more probably this verse also refers to the same Meccan group. In other places too the same explanation may be given to the word, "those who disbelieve", unless there is a reason to the contrary.

Likewise, wherever the word, "those who believe", has been used in the Qur'ãn it refers to the first and early Muslims — unless there is any reason to believe otherwise. This style of address was reserved for them as a protocol of honour.

QUR'ÃN: *Allãh has set a seal . . . great punishment*: Allãh has ascribed the sealing to His own action, but the covering over their eyes is attributed to their own selves. It shows that they had put a curtain on their souls against the light of truth — it was their own choice. Then, after their sins and disbelief, Allãh put another curtain or seal over their souls. Their disbelief and misdeeds thus fall between two curtains — the first from themselves, the second from Allãh.

Its further explanation will be given under 2:26; *Surely Allãh is not ashamed to set forth any parable — that of a gnat or any thing above that . . .*

Disbelief, like belief, has various degrees and ranks; and its effects also vary, like those of belief.

TRADITIONS

az-Zubayrī says that he said to aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.): "Tell me how many ways of *al-kufr* (اَلْكُفْر = disbelief, infidelity, to cover) are there according to the Book of Allãh? Mighty and Great is

He ! He (the Imãm) said: `Disbelief, according to the Book of Allãh, is of five types. There is the disbelief of denial (and denial is of two kinds), and the disbelief by neglecting what Allãh has ordered, and the disbelief of disavowal, and the ingratitude. As for the disbelief of denial,it is denial of the Lord-ship; it is the talk of those who say: "there is no Lord (i.e. Creator), nor any Garden nor Fire". It is the word of two groups of disbelievers who are called atheists. And they are those who say: "*nothing destroys us but time*" (45:24). It is a religion invented by them as it seemed good to them, but they have no proof to support their view. That is why Allãh has said (about them): *And they have no knowledge of that*; *they only conjecture* (ibid.), that it is in reality as they say. And He also said: *Surely those who disbelieve, alike is it to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe.*' " (*al-Kãfī*)

And as for the second kind, it is the denial after knowing; it means that the denier denies (the existence of God), but he knows (very well) that He is the truth, and he is convinced of it (in his heart). And Allãh has said (about such people): *And they denied them unjustly and proudly while their soul had been convinced of them* (27:14); . . . *and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved, but when there came to them that which they did recognize* (*i.e.* the Prophet) *they disbelieved in him*; *so Allãh's curse is on the unbelievers* (2:89).

So this is the explanation of the two kinds of denial.

And the third way of disbelief is ingratitude to the bounties (of Allãh); and it is as Allãh says quoting (the Prophet) Sulaymãn: "*This is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful*; *and whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Honoured*" (27:40); *If you are grateful, I would certainly give you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is*

truly severe (14:7). *Therefore remember Me, I will remember you, and be thankful to Me, and do not be ungrateful to Me* (2:152). (In all these verses Allãh has used the word *al-kufr* = disbelief, to denote ungratefulness, and in-gratitude.)
And the fourth way of disbelief is leaving out or neglecting what Allãh has ordered to do. It is as Allãh says: *And when We made a covenant with you*: *You shall not shed your blood and you shall not turn your people out of your cities*; *then you gave a promise while you witnessed. Yet you it is who slay your people and turn a party from among you out of their homes, backing each other up against them unlawfully and exceeding the limits*; *and if they should come to you as captives, you would ransom them — while their very turning out was unlawful for you. Do you then believe in a part of the book and disbelieve in the other?* (2:84 -85). In this verse Allãh has charged them with disbelief because they did not follow the commandment of Allãh; (it should be noted that) Allãh has (in this very verse) linked them to belief, yet He did not accept it from them and it did not benefit them before Allãh. So Allãh (further) said: *What then is the reward of such among you as do this but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the day of resurrection they shall be sent back to the most grievous chastisement, and Allãh is not at all heedless of what you do* (ibid.)

And the fifth way of disbelief is disavowal. It is as Allãh says, quoting Ibrãḥīm (a.s.) ". . . *we renounce you, and enmity and hatred have appeared between us and you for ever until you believe in Allãh alone*" (60:4), that is, we disavow and repudiate you. And He says, describing Iblīs and his disowning his friends from mankind on the Day of Resurrection: ". . . *surely I disbelieved in your associating me* (with Allãh) *before*" (14:22). And also He says: *And he said*: *"You have only taken for yourselves idols besides Allãh by way of friendship between you in the world's life, then on the resurrection day some of you shall deny others, and some of*

you shall curse others . . . (29:25), that is, some of you shall dissociate from others.

The author says: This tradition confirms what we have previously mentioned that disbelief has many grades and ranks.

* * * * *

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ
بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ــ ٨ . يُخَادِعُونَ اللهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلاَّ
أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ــ ٩ . فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللهُ مَرَضاً
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ــ ١٠ . وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا
تُفْسِدُوا فِي الأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ــ ١١ . أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ
هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ــ ١٢ . وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا
كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ
وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ــ ١٣ . وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا
خَلَوْا إِلَى شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ ــ ١٤ .
اللهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ــ ١٥ . أُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلَالَةَ بِالْهُدَى فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا
مُهْتَدِينَ ــ ١٦ . مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَاراً فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ
مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ــ ١٧ .
صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ــ ١٨ . أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ
ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ
حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ــ ١٩ . يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ
يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ ــ ٢٠ .

And there are some people who say**:** ***“We believe in Allãh and in the last day*****";** ***while they are not at all believers*** **(8).** ***They desire to deceive Allãh and those who believe, and they do not deceive except themselves and they do not perceive*** **(9).** ***There is a disease in their hearts, so Allãh added to their disease and for them is a painful chastisement because of the lie they were saying*** **(10).** ***And when it is said to them, “Do not make mischief in the land*****",** ***they say*****:** ***“We are but peace-makers*****”** **(11).** ***Now surely they themselves are the mischief-makers, but they do not perceive*** **(12).** ***And when it is said to them*****:** ***“Believe as the people have believed*** **",** ***they say*****:** ***“Shall we believe as the fools have believed?*****”** ***Now surely they themselves are the fools, but they do not know*** **(13).** ***And when they meet those who believe, they say*****:** ***“We believe*** **";** ***and when they are alone with their Satans, they say*****:** ***“Surely we are with you, we were only mocking*****”** **(14).** ***Allãh pays them back their mockery, and leaves them alone in their rebellion blindly wandering on*** **(15).** ***These are they who buy error for the guidance, so their bargain brings*** **(them)** ***no gain, nor are they guided aright*** **(16).** ***Their parable is like the parable of one who kindled a fire, but when it had illumined all around him, Allãh took away their light, and left them in utter darkness — they do not see*** **(17).** ***Deaf dumb*** **(and)** ***blind, so they will not turn back*** **(18).** ***Or like an abundant rain from the heaven in which is utter darkness and thunder and lightning*****;** ***they put their fingers into their ears because of the thunder peals, for fear of death, and Allãh encompasses the unbelievers*** **(19).** ***The lightning almost takes away their sight*****;** ***whenever it shines on them they walk in it, and when it becomes dark to them they stand still*****;** ***and if***

***Allãh had pleased He would certainly have taken away their hearing and their sight*; *surely Allãh has power over all things* (20)**.

COMMENTARY

These thirteen verses are about the hypocrites. We shall discuss this subject in detail in Chapter 63 (The Hypocrites) and in some other places.

QUR'ÃN: *They desire to deceive*: *"al-Khad`ah"* (اَلْخَدْعَةُ) is deceit, duplicity.

QUR'ÃN: *When they are alone with their Saṭans*: *"ash-Shayṭãn"* (اَلشَّيْطانُ) means evil, wicked; that is why the Iblis is called the Satan.

QUR'ÃN: *Their parable is like the parable of one who kindled a fire . . . they will not return*: The hypocrites are like a man who is surrounded by a blinding darkness in which he cannot distinguish good from bad, beneficial from harmful; to remove it he kindles a fire, and in its light is able to see to some distance around it; then as soon as it has illumined all around, Allãh, extinguishes it by wind, rain or some other thing like it and he is left as he was before — in utter darkness. And now he is pressed between two darknesses — that of the night and that of bewilderment and nullity of his endeavour. This parable fits exactly on hypocrites. A hypocrite declares himself to be a Muslim, and through it gains some benefits, as he is treated as a Muslim in matters of marriage and inheritance etc. But as soon as death approaches — the time when the real and complete benefits of Islam should have appeared — Allãh takes away the light, nullifies his deeds and leaves him in utter darkness in which he cannot see_ at all. Thus he falls between two darkness — his original one and the one he added with his dark deeds.

QUR'ÃN: *Or like an abundant rain . . . Allãh has power over all things*: "*aṣ-Ṣayyib*" (اَلْصَّيِّبُ = abundant rain); "*al-barq*" (اَلْبَرقُ = lightning; flesh of lightning); "*al-ra'd*" (اَلْرَّعدُ = thunder that is heard after lightning); "*aṣ-ṣã'iqah*" (اَلْصَّاعِقَة = thunderbolt, to strike with lightning).

This is another example for the hypocrites. A man is caught in a rainpour; darkness surrounds him, he is unable to see around and loses his bearings. The rain tells him to run away; to find a shelter somewhere, but darkness prevents him from it; frightening thunder and lightning-bolts have overwhelmed him, yet when lightning appears he tries to take its advantage by walking ahead in its light — but it appears only for a fleeting moment and then disappears; whenever it shines he walks ahead and when darkness I engulfs him again he stops.

A hypocrite is exactly in the same position. He does not like Islam, but has to profess to be a Muslim. His words do not reach his heart; what he says is different from what he believes in his heart. Because of this discrepancy his path is not illuminated as it should have been. The result is that he gropes about aimlessly and stumbles every now and then; he walks a little and then stops. Thus Allãh punishes him with disgrace; and had He wished so, He would have taken away his sight and hearing, thereby disgracing him on the very first day.

* * * * *

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ــ ٢١ . الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشاً وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً
وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقاً لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا
لِلَّهِ أَنْدَاداً وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ــ ٢٢ . وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا
عَلَى عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِنْ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ــ ٢٣. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي
وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ــ ٢٤ . وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقاً قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأُتُوا
بِهِ مُتَشَابِهاً وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ــ ٢٥ .

O men! worship your Lord Who created you and those before you so that you may guard **(against evil) (21)*****; Who made the earth a bed*** **(resting place)** ***and the sky a structure*****;** ***and*** **(*****Who*****)** ***sends down rain from the heaven, thereby brings forth with it subsistence for you of the fruits*****;** ***therefore do not set up equals to Allãh while you know*** **(22)*****. And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your***

***witnesses besides Allãh if you are truthful* (23). *But if you do* (it) *not — and never shall you do* (it) *— then be on guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel*; *it is prepared for the unbelievers* (24). *And convey good news to those who believe and do good deeds that for them are gardens in which rivers flow*; *whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say*: "*This is what was given to us before*;" *and they shall be given the like of it, and they shall have pure mates in them*; *and in them they shall abide* (25).**

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *O men! worship your Lord . . . may guard* (against evil): The preceding nineteen verses have described the positions of the three groups category-wise: The pious ones who are on the guidance from their Lord; the disbelievers whose hearts and ears have been sealed and who have their eyes covered; and the hypocrites in whose hearts there is disease so Allãh added to their disease and they are deaf, dumb and blind.

In this background, Allãh calls the men to be His good servants, to worship Him and to join, not the disbelievers and the hypocrites, but the pious ones, those who guard themselves against evil. This context shows that the clause, "so that you may guard (against evil)", is governed by the verb "worship" — you should worship Allãh to join those who guard against evil, who are pious. It may also be governed by the verb, "created" — Allãh created you in order that you may guard yourselves against evil.

QUR'ÃN: *Who made the earth a bed . . . do not set up equals to Allãh while you know*: "*al-Andãd*" (اَلأنْدادُ) is plural of *an-*

nidd (اَلنِّدُّ = alike, equal, peer). The phrase, "while you know", is unconditional, and grammatically it is circumstantial phrase of "do not set up"; these two factors lend extra-ordinary force to the prohibition of setting up equals to Allãh. The sentence shows that a man who has even a little knowledge should not ascribe any equal or partner to Allãh; he should know that it is Allãh Who has created him and those before him and arranged and managed this system in the creation for their sustenance and survival.

QUR'ÃN: *And if you are in doubt . . . then produce a chapter like it . . .*: It is a challenge which human beings and jinn can never meet. This challenge has been offered to demonstrate the miracle of the Qur'ãn, to show that it is a Book sent down by Allãh, there is no doubt in it; that it has been revealed as an ever-lasting miracle that will remain alive till the end of the world. This challenge has repeatedly been given in the Qur'ãn:

Say: "*If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'ãn, they could not bring the like of it, even though some of them were aiders of the others*" (17:88).

Or, do they say: *"He has forged it?"* *Say*: *"Then bring ten chapters like it forged and call upon whom you can besides Allãh, if you are truthful*" (11:13)

This context shows that the pronoun "it" in "like it" refers to "that which We have revealed to Our servant", that is, the Qur'ãn. It is a challenge to them to bring a like of the Qur'ãn in its inimitable style and meaning.

The word "*min mithlihi*" (مِنْ مِثْلِهِ = translated here as "like it") may also be rendered as "from like him". In that case it will be a challenge to bring a like of the Qur'ãn written by someone like the Holy Prophet. This Qur'ãn has been brought by a person who was never taught by any teacher, who had not learnt these valuable and marvellous truths from any

human being, nor had he taken this most eloquent style from any mortal. If the disbelievers thought that such a man can write such a Book, then let them bring its like from some such illiterate man. In this light, the verse would have the same import as the following one:

Say: *"If Allãh had desired* (otherwise) *I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have taught it to you*; *indeed I have lived a lifetime among you before it*; *do you not then understand?*" (10:16)

Both explanations have been given in some traditions. Obviously, this and the other challenging verses dare the antagonists to bring, if they can, like of even the shortest chapter of the Qur'ãn — say, the Chapter of *al-Kawthar* or *al-'Aṣr.*

A strange exegesis has been written by someone that "like it" means like this Chapter, The Cow, in which this verse occurs. This explanation is totally devoid of good literary taste. Those who disbelieved in the Qur'ãn, rejected the whole Book as being forged against Allãh. What purpose could be served by challenging them to bring a Chapter like that of The Cow? Such a challenge would, in final analysis, mean this: If you are in doubt the short Chapter of *al-Kawthar* or *al-Ikhlãṣ,* then bring a like of the largest Chapter of The Cow. Absurd, isn't it !

MIRACLE AND ITS QUIDDITY

The claim of the Qur'ãn that it is a miraculous sign, and the challenge to the doubters offered by this verse, contains in reality two claims: First, that miracles, super-natural events, do occur; second, that the Qur'ãn is one of such miracles. If the second claim is proved, the first will automatically be proved. That is why the Qur'ãn has challenged the men to bring its like, as it would prove both aspects of the claim.

How does a miracle happen? After all, it is against the

deep-rooted system of the cause-and-effect which is never negated. The Qur'ãn explains this subject in the following two stages:

First: The miracle is a reality; the Qur'ãn is one of the miracles, which in itself proves the existence of miracles in general; it offers a challenge to its adversaries, and in this way proves its truth.

Second: What is the reality of miracle? How can a thing happen in this world of nature against the universal law of the cause-and-effect?

THE MIRACLE OF THE QUR'ÃN

Undoubtedly, the Qur'ãn has offered a continuing challenge, by which it proves itself to be a miracle. This challenge has been given in many verses of Meccan as well as Medinite period. All of them show that this Book is a divine miracle, a super-natural sign. The verse under discussion, "And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it . . .", is one of those challenges: Produce a chapter like one of the Qur'ãn from someone like the Prophet. It should be noted that it does not purport to prove the prophethood of Muhammad (s. a. w. a.) directly; it does not say, 'if you are in doubt as to the prophethood of Our servant'; instead it says, `if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant'. Likewise, all the challenges given in the Qur'ãn aim to prove that this Book is a super-natural sign from Allãh. And when this fact is established, the prophethood of the Prophet will automatically be proved.

The verses of challenge vary in their scope and generality. The most general is the verse: *Say*: *"If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'ãn, they could not bring the like of it, even though some of them were aiders of the others*" (17:88). The verse is of Meccan period, and it is easy to see that it contains an all-encompassing challenge.

This challenge is not confined to its unsurpassed eloquence and purest style. Otherwise, the challenge would not cover non-Arabs; it could be addressed to only those who spoke pure Arabic before it was debased by foreign influence — in other words, only to the Arabs of the days of paganism or to those whose life-span bridged the time of paganism and that of Islam. But the verse challenges not only the whole mankind but confronts the *jinn* also.

As for other special qualities of the Qur'ãn (like the exposition of spiritual realities, the high morals, the most comprehensive and the fairest legal code, the information of the things unseen as well as other subjects which the man had not even thought of when the Qur'ãn was revealed), they are of such a nature that only a selected group — and not the whole mankind — may appreciate them. But the challenge is general and covers elites and common men and *jinn.* It is clear in this light that it is not confined to any one quality; it defies them to bring a like of this Book in all its qualities together.

The Qur'ãn is a miracle: For a man of eloquence, in its spellbinding sublimity and style; for a sage, in its sagacity; for a scholar, in its knowledge; for a sociologist, in its social system; for a legislator, in its legislation; for a politician, in its politics; for a ruler, in its rule of justice; and for the whole world, in such things which none of them can grasp like the information of the unseen, prophecies of future events, freedom from discrepancy in its laws, knowledge and expression.

The Qur'ãn claims to be a comprehensive miracle, covering all its aspects. It is a miracle for every individual man and *jinn* — an average person or a select one, learned or ignorant, man or woman, of a very high rank of excellence or of a lower level — in short, anyone who has enough intelligence to understand the Qur'ãnic speech. Man, by nature, comprehends a virtue and understands its various grades. Every person should look into an excellence which he

or someone else has got; then he should compare that excellence or virtue with what the Qur'ãn contains of the same; and then he should decide — in all honestly and justice — whether it is in human power to bring a like of the Qur'ãn. Is it possible for a man to bring such divine knowledge, so well-reasoned, as the Qur'ãn has done? Is it within human power to build such character, based on foundation of reality, which may honestly be compared with the Qur'ãnic teaching in purity and excellence? Can human beings legislate perfect laws covering all human activities without blundering into discrepancies, with the spirit of monotheism and the word of piety permeating every order and its every implication, with purity and cleanliness feeding its root and shoots? Can such astonishing comprehensiveness and all-inclusiveness come from an untaught man? A man who was born and brought up among a people whose only share in human virtues was a life sustained with raids, plunders and wars; they buried their daughters alive, and killed their children for fear of poverty; they boasted of their fathers and married their mothers; debauchery was their pride; they condemned knowledge and showed off their ignorance; in spite of their haughtiness and chauvinism, they were preyed upon by every hunter and were easy targets for anyone whowished to conquer them — one day they were under the Yemenite rule, the next day were ruled over Or the Ethiopians; some day Byzantine emperors lorded over them, the other day it was Persia's turn to humiliate them. This is the picture, in miniature, of the Arabs before Islam. And in such environment, the Qur'ãn was brought by the Prophet of Islam.

Again, suppose a man brings a book, claiming that it is a guidance for the worlds. Will he dare to include in it the news and information of the unseen — both past and future — not in one or two places but spread over a lot of topics — in stories, in prophecies, and about the events that are to happen in future? And what will be your judgement if not a single detail proves wrong?

Once again, man is a part of this natural world; this world is constantly changing and developing from perfection to perfection. Is it possible for a man to talk about each and every affair of human life; to give the world knowledge, laws, wisdom, admonition, parables, stories — concerning every matter, big or small — without committing any discrepancy, without showing any trace of gradual development? And especially so, if his talks are not delivered all at one time, are delivered piecemeal in a long period of twenty-three years? And even more so when some topics are repeated again and again, when there are shoots sprouting from a previously planted root? Undoubtedly, it is not possible, because no man can remain unchanged in his knowledge and outlook throughout his life.

When a man ponders over these facts about the Qur'ãn — containing the above-mentioned distinctions besides many more — he can entertain no doubt whatsoever about its divine origin; he will feel sure that it is beyond human power, over and above the natural and material causes. If someone is not in a position to understand this clear fact, he should follow the dictate of his nature — in other words, he should ask those who are knowledge-able about this subject.

Question: Why did not the Qur'ãn confine its challenge to the elite only? What is the use of including general public in this call? After all, a common man is easily_ influenced by such claims and it takes him no time to accept pretensions of every pretender. Don't you see that it was this group that surrendered to al-Bãb, al -Bahã', Mirzã Ghulãm Aḥmad Qãdiyãni and al-Musaylamah, even though what those deceivers brought as their proof was more like a senseless jabber and raving delirium than a sensible talk?

Reply: It was the only way to keep the miracle all-inclusive; the only possible method for discerning the perfection and excellence in a quality that has various ranks and grades. People have different grades of understanding;

likewise, the virtues differ in their perfection. Those who have high level of understanding and correct perception will easily appreciate the high quality of an excellent work. Those who have a lower understanding should refer to the former for their judgement. It is the dictate of nature and demand of human psyche.

A miracle that can be universal and comprehensive, that can be addressed to every individual, in every place and at all times, that can be conveyed to all and can remain alive to the last day of the world, must necessarily be a set of divine know-ledge and spiritual realities. All other miracles were either material objects or a tangible event that were governed by the laws of nature inasmuch as they were confined to a certain time and space. They were seen by only a limited number of people; even supposing, for the sake of argument, that it was observed by all people of that particular place, it could not be witnessed by people of other localities; and suppose that an impossible happened, that is, it was seen by the whole world, it could not continue eternally for the future generations to observe.

It was for this reason that Allãh chose this academic and spiritual miracle, that is, the Qur'ãn, for the Prophet of Islam, so that it may continue its challenge to the whole mankind — in all places and in all generations. And thus the miracle continues in its generality, defying every person, in every area and every era.

FIRST SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: THE KNOWLEDGE IT CONTAINS

Now we come to its specific challenges. It has offered particular challenge concerning the knowledge it imparts and cognition it contains. Allãh says: . . . *and We have revealed the Book to you explaining clearly everything* (16:89); . . . *nor anything green nor dry but* (it is all) *in a clear book*

(6:59). There are many other verses of the same theme. Look at the fundamental teachings given in the text of the Qur'ãn; then see its details for which it has referred the people to the Prophet — as Allãh says: . . . *and whatever the Apostle gives you, take it, and from what-ever he forbids you, keep back* . . . (59:7); . . . *that you may judge between people by means of that which Allãh has taught you* (4:105). Then you will know that Islam has put its attention to all big and small topics relevant to divine knowledge, moral virtues and religious laws — covering worship, mutual dealings, social regulations, penal code, and, in short, everything that affects life and character. All this is based on the foundation of human nature and monotheism. Analyse the details and you will find monotheism as their basis; combine the basis with relevant principles and you will get the details.

Then it has declared that all this knowledge will remain valid to the end of the world; will continue to guide mankind and will always be relevant to human needs and environment. Allãh says: . . . *and most surely it is a Mighty Book*: *Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it*; *a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One* (41:41—42). *Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian* (15:9). In other words, it is a Book which is beyond the reach of the law of change and development; it will never be disturbed by abrogation.

A question may be asked here: The sociologists are of the opinion that the laws and regulations controlling the society must change according to the changes occurring in the structure of society. As the time passes and civilization marches ahead, it becomes necessary to change the laws to cope with the changed situation. Then how can the *shari `ah of* Islam continue without any change or abrogation all these centuries? We shall explain this matter, God willing, under the verse: *Mankind was but one people* . . . (2:213). Here it is enough to point out that the Qur'ãn has built its laws on the foundation *of*

monotheism and excellent ethics that spring from healthy human nature; it declares that legislation must grow up from the seed *of* creation and existence. The scholars *of* sociology, on the other hand, have fixed their eyes on changes *of* society, totally ignoring the spiritual side *of* monotheism and morality. As a result, their word concentrates on material development of the society — and society is not a living organism, it does not have a soul; and the word of Allãh is the highest.

SECOND SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: THE RECIPIENT OF THE REVELATION

Another aspect of this challenge is the personality of the untaught Prophet who brought this Qur'ãn as a miracle in its words and in its meanings. He had not learnt from any teacher, was not trained by any instructor. This challenge is contained in the following words of Allãh: *Say*: *"If Allãh had desired* (otherwise) *I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have taught it to you*; *indeed I have lived a lifetime among you before it*; *do you not then understand?*" (10:16). The Prophet lived among them as one of them. In all those years, he had not risen above them in scholarship, nor was he renowned for any knowledge. He did not deliver any lecture, nor did he compose a single line of poetry, upto his fortieth year — that is to say, for about two-thirds of his total life-span; he did not get any distinction in literature or scholarship all these years. Then, all of a sudden, he brought what he said was the revelation from God, before which giants of literature felt like pigmies, and eloquent speakers became tongue-tied. He published that revelation to the furthest limits of the world, but no one dared to bring its like in all these centuries.

The outmost that his adversaries could say was that he must have learnt those stories from Christian monks during his trade-journeys to Syria. But he had gone to Syria only twice:

First, in his early childhood, with his uncle, Abu Tãlib and then, at the age of twenty-five, with Maysarah, the slave of Khadījah. In both these journeys he was never alone day or night, and no-body ever reported any such meeting with any supposed teacher. Even if we accept for the sake of argument that such training session did take place, many questions will arise from it: Who taught him this divine knowledge of monotheism? Where did he get these wise rules and these realities? And lastly, who gave him this unsurpassed elocution which has kept the silver-tongued elocutionists dumbfounded all these years?

Another suggestion was that he learned these sublime truths from a blacksmith, of Roman origin, who made and sold swords. Allãh replied to this allegation in this verse: *And certainly We know that they say*: *"Only a mortal teaches him". The tongue of him whom they are inclined to blame for it is barbarous, and this is clear Arabic language* (16:103).

A third accusation was that he gained this knowledge from Salmãn, the Persian, who allegedly knew all about various religions and sects. But Salmãn met the Prophet in Medina and thereafter accepted Islam, while the major portion of the Qur'ãn was revealed at Mecca, and that part contained all the principles, know-ledge and stories that were later repeated at Medina — we may say that Meccan revelation had more of these thing, than the verses revealed at Medina. The question is: What knowledge did Salmãn add after his conversion to Islam? Nothing.

Moreover, read the Old and the New Testaments, and compare the stories of the previous prophets and their people written in them with those revealed in the Qur'ãn. You will see that the latter's history and stories are different from the former's. The Bible attributes such sins and evils to the prophets of Allãh which one would be loath to ascribe to an average man of good character. But the Qur'ãn absolves them from such blames. Then you will find in the Bible many topics that have no bearing on, and relevance to, the spiritual knowledge or

moral excellence. The Qur'ãn never talks except about that which is truly beneficial to people in their spiritual upliftment and character-building.

THIRD SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: ITS PROPHECIES AND INFORMATION OF UNSEEN

The Qur'ãn's third specific challenge is concerning its prophecies and the information it gives of the unseen. Such verses may be divided in four categories:

1. The information about previous prophets and their nations: Allãh says about some of these stories: *These are of the tidings of the unseen which We revealed to you*; *you did not know them* — (neither) *you nor your people* — *before this . . .* (11:49); and He says after the story of Yũsuf: *This is of the tidings of the unseen* (which) *We revealed to you, and you were not with them when they resolved upon their affair, and they were devising plans* (12:102); also, about the story of Maryam: *This is of the tidings of the unseen which We reveal to you*; *and you were not with them when they cast their pens* (to decide) *which of them should have Maryam in his charge, and you were not with them when they contended one with another* (3:44); and about `Isã: *Such is 'Isã, son of Maryam*; (this is) *the saying of truth about which they dispute* (19:34). There are many verses of the same import.

Prophecies of future events: For example: The Romans would avenge their defeat: *The Romans are vanquished, in a near land*; *and they, after being vanquished, shall overcome, within a few years* (30:2-4); the Prophet would return to Mecca after his *hijrah*: *Most surely He Who has made the Qur'ãn binding on you will bring you back to the destination* (28:85); the vision of the Prophet would certainly come true: *Certainly Allãh had shown to His Apostle the vision with truth*: *You shall most certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allãh pleases, in security,* (some) *having their heads shaved and* (others) *having their hair-cut, you shall not fear* (48:27); the

behaviour, in future, of a group of Muslims: *Those who are left behind will say when you set forth for the gaining of acquisition*: *Allow us* (that) *we may follow you. They desire to change the words of Allãh* (48:15); nobody would be able to harm the Prophet: . . . *and Allãh will protect you form the men* (5:70); the Qur'ãn will remain under the protection of Allãh: *Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian* (15:9). We may include in this category other numerous verses giving good tidings to the believers *and* threatening the disbelievers and pagans of Mecca of various retributions.

In this category come the prophecies of the signs and disturbances appearing soon before the Day of Judgement. For example: *And it is forbidden to a town which We destroyed that they shall not return, until when Gog and Magog are let loose and they shall hasten forth from every elevated place. And the true promise shall draw nigh, then lo! the eyes of those who disbelieved shall be fixedly open: O woe to us! surely we were in heedlessness as to this; nay, we were unjust ones* (21:95-97). *Allãh has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them successors in the earth as He made successors those before them . . .* (24:55). *Say*: *"He has the power that He should send on you a chastisement from above you or from beneath your feet, or that He should throw you into confusion,* (making you) *of different parties*; *and make some of you taste the fighting of to others. . . ."* (6:65).

3. The verses based on such scientific realities which were unknown, and even unthought-of, when the Qur'ãn was revealed, and which have just now been discovered after long researches: *And We send the winds fertilizing* (15:22); *And the earth — We have spread it forth and put in it anchors* (*i.e.* mountains) *and caused to grow in it of everything, weighed* (15:19); *Have We not made the earth a resting place, and the mountains as pegs* (therein)? (78:6-7).

The verses that allude to many great events and disorders that were to happen in the Islamic community, or the world in

general, after the lifetime of the Prophet. For example: *O you who believe! whoever of you turns back from his religion, then soon Allãh will bring a people that He shall love them and they shall love Him, humbled before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, they shall strive hard in Allãh's way and shall not fear the censure of any censurer*; *this is Allãh's grace, He gives it to whom He pleases* (5:54); *And every nation had an apostle*; *so when their apostle came, the matter was decided between them with justice and they shall not be dealt with unjustly. And they say*: *"When will this threat come about, if you are truthful?" Say*; *"I do not control for myself any harm, or any benefit, except what Allãh pleases*; *every nation has a term*; *when their term comes, they shall not then remain behind for an hour, nor can they go before* (their time)". *Say*: *"Tell me if His punishment overtakes you by night or by day! what then is there of it that the guilty would hasten on?"* (10:47-50); *Then set your face uprightly for the* (right) *religion in natural devotion* (to the truth), *the nature made by Allãh in which He has made men*; *. . . and be not of the polytheists, of those who divided their religion and became sects*; *every sect rejoicing in what they had with them* (30:30 -32). There are many verses that come into this category, and we shall describe some of them when explaining the seventeenth chapter (The Night-journey). It should be noted here that this category is one of the specialities of this book of ours.

FOURTH SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: NO DISCREPANCIES IN THE QUR'ÃN

It is one of the challenges of the Qur'ãn that there is no discrepancy in it. Allãh says: *Do they not then meditate on the Qur'ãn? And if it were from any other than Allãh, they would have found in it many a discrepancy* (4:82).

This is a material world, governed by the law of change and development. Every item in this world changes day after day

from weakness to strength, from deficiency to perfection — in its own self as well as in all its concomitants and attachments. Man is no exception to this rule. He also undergoes constant change and development in his existence as well as in effects of his actions and reactions. And this law applies also to what he gets through his perception and intellect. Every man finds that his to-day is a bit more perfect than his yesterday. Every passing hour makes him realizewhat mistakes he had committed in the past hour, what erroneous views he had held a few hours back. It is a fact that no sane person can deny.

In this background, look at the Qur'ãn. Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) brought this book piece by piece, one small chapter or a few verses at a time. It continued for twenty-three years in different places, various conditions and divergent situations: In Mecca and Medina, by day and by night, during journeys and at home, in thick of battle and in time of peace, during hard up days and in easy times, when Muslims suffered defeat and when they were victorious, in safety and in danger. It contained all types of subjects — it unveiled spiritual knowledge, taught excellent ethics and ordained laws for every conceivable aspect of life. In spite of all these factors, there is not a whiff of discrepancy in its matter or meaning — it is an oft-repeated book whose parts resemble one with the other. There is not a least difference, contradiction or contrariety in the realities it has explained, in the principles it has laid down. One verse explains the rest, one sentence clarifies the others, as Ali (a.s.) said: "Its one part speaks with the other, and one portion testifies about the others."

No doubt, if such a book would have been from other than Allãh, there would have been a lot of ups and downs in its style; the speech would have bounced between elegance and clumsiness; the themes would have ranged from correct to erroneous. In short, the book would have been uneven, unbalanced and full of discrepancies.

Question: This is a claim without any proof. Non-

Muslim scholars have written many books showing that the Qur'ãn suffers from many discrepancies and mistakes — in construction of sentences (which fall short of the standard of eloquence) as well as in themes and meanings (which contain errors in its views and teachings). The replies given by the Muslims are just piteous attempts to explain away those contradictions and shortcomings. Those are defects that a correct and good speech should not have had in the first place.

Reply: The so-called discrepancies and defects have not been discovered by our adversaries; they have been mentioned (together with their replies) by Muslims in their books of exegesis and other subjects related to the Qur'ãn (not excepting this book of ours); the Muslim authors have used this method to show that what looks at the first glance an unusual style or expression is in fact a gem of highest eloquence. The non-Muslim writers have just picked out those supposed defects and discrepancies and collected them in their books, ignoring the replies that showed the real beauty of those expressions. If eye of love is blind, the eye of enmity is not any brighter.

Question: Well, how can you explain away the difficulty that arises out of abrogation? Many Qur'ãnic verses have been abrogated, as the Qur'ãn itself says: *Whatever signs We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or like it* (2:106); *And when We change* (one) *communication for* (an-other) *communication, and Allãh knows best what He reveals* . . . (16:101). Abrogation is at least a change of opinion, an inconsistency of thought, if not an outright contradiction in speech.

Reply: Abrogation is neither a contradiction in speech nor a change of opinion or thought. A rule is abrogated when the society, the environment, changes in such a way that the under-lying wisdom of that rule remains no longer valid. The difference, if any, is not in the opinion; it is rather in the subject matter. A clear evidence of it may be seen in the

abrogated verses themselves — they invariably always contained some phrases or clauses to show that the given order was a temporary one, that it would soon be abrogated. For example: *And as for those who are guilty of lewdness from among your women, call to witness against them four* (witnesses) *from among you*; *then if they bear witness confine them to the houses until death takes them away or Allãh makes some way for them* (4:15). Note the last sentence and the hint it gives. Another example: *Many of the people of the Book wish that they could turn you back into unbelievers after your faith . . . But pardon and forgive* (them) *until Allãh should bring about His command* (2:109). Here too the concluding phrase shows that the rule ordained was not for ever.

FIFTH SPECIFIC CHALLENGE: ITS ELOQUENCE

The Qur'ãn has also challenged its adversaries to bring its like in its eloquence. Allãh says: *Or, do they say*: *"He has forged it?" Say*: *"Then bring ten chapters like it forged and call upon whom you can besides Allãh, if you are truthful." But if they do not answer you, then know that it is revealed by Allãh's knowledge and that there is no god but He*; *will you then submit?* (11:13 -14) These verses were revealed at Mecca. Again Allãh says: *Or, do they say: "He has forged it?" Say*: *"Then bring a chapter like this and call whom you can besides Allãh, if you are truthful." Nay, they have rejected that of which they have no comprehensive knowledge, and its final interpretation has not yet come to them* (10:38-39). These are Meccan verses too. All these verses challenge the doubters and disbelievers to bring the like of ten or even one chapter of the Qur'ãn in its style and eloquence, as eloquence was the most accomplished art of the Arabs of those days. Undoubtedly, they had reached the highest peak of eloquence. No preceding, contemporary or following nation ever reached even near them in their mastery

of literature. Their expression was elegant, their style enchanting; their words perfectly fitted their themes and meanings; their talks were always in harmony with the occasions; their words were plain and their sentences beautiful; and their speech had an easy flow and inimitable grace. It was a way of which they were the pioneers and the only walkers. The Qur'ãn challenged such a nation in every possible way, so as to excite their rage, rouse their fury and fire them with determination to meet the challenge. It should not be forgotten that they were extremely proud of their art of eloquence and -never acknowledged the least elocutionary skill to anyone else. In spite of that arrogance of theirs, the Prophet dared them to bring just one chapter like the Qur'ãn. It is a challenge that even now is ringing in the ears of disbelievers, defying them to forge, if they can, just one chapter like it. But the Arabs' only answer was to avoid it; the more forcefully they were challenged, the more evident their helplessness was. Ultimately, they used to hide themselves to avoid hearing its sound. Allãh says: *Now surely they fold up their breasts that they may conceal from Him*; *now surely, when they put their garments as a covering, He knows what they conceal and what they make known* (11:5).

Even after fourteen centuries, no one has been able to bring its like. Those who tried it put themselves to shame and made themselves targets of ridicule. History has preserved some samples of those pathetic attempts. Musaylamah (who posed as a prophet) wrote these words in reply to the Qur'ãn ch. 105 (The Elephant): "The elephant, what is the elephant! And what will make you understand what the elephant is? It has an unwholesome tail, and a long trunk." In another "verse", which he recited before al-Sajãḥ (who also claimed to be a prophetess), he said: ". . . then we penetrate it into you women a hard penetration, and take it out from you forcefully . . ." Look at this rigmarole and decide its worth. A Christian in latter days wrote this "chapter" in reply to the Chapter of The Opening: "All praise is due to the Beneficent, the Lord of the

beings, the king, the Subduer. For Thee is the worship, and from Thee is the help. Guide us to the path of faith."

All attempts to meet this challenge suffered the same fate.

Two Questions:

First: It is unreasonable to say that a speech can reach a level where it would become a miracle, a super-natural work. Language has been made by human ingenuity. How can a product of nature be above the reach of nature? A maker is more powerful than the thing he makes; a cause always encompasses its effect. It is the man who invented the words to meet his social needs, to convey to others' minds what one thinks or feels. The relationship of a word with its meaning is created by man. It is a subjective quality given to the word by man. This quality cannot reach beyond the ability of the maker himself. In other words, it is impossible for a speech to rise above the human ability.

Second: Let us accept for the time being that a particular composition of a speech may reach super-natural level, may be-come a miracle. Every intended theme may be clothed in varioussentences, each differing from the others in grades of perfection; and out of those numerous sentences one would reach a standard which would be beyond human ability and power — and that composition would be a miracle. It means that for every intended meaning there would be one miraculous sentence; and other structures would be below that standard. But we see that the Qur'ãn, more often than not, repeats many themes — and especially the stories — using different compositions and dissimilar styles. Whichever sentence-structure and style is accepted as a miracle, the other ones would fall short of that standard.

Reply: Before replying to these objections one matter should be clarified here.

It were such questions which led some Muslim scholars to believe in the theory of *aṣ-ṣarf* (الصَّرْفُ = to turn away):

They believed like other Muslims that it was impossible for men to bring a like of the whole Qur'ãn; or its ten chapters, or even one chapter. But, according to them, this inability of men was not based on the fact that the Qur'ãnic speech in itself was beyond the human power. The real reason was that Allãh, by His predominant will and decree, has turned away and dissuaded would-be adversaries from bringing its like. Allãh has done so to preserve and protect the sanctity of the prophethood.

This theory was totally wrong. This explanation is not in conformity with the clear import of the challenging verses. Allãh says for example: *Or, do they say*: *"He has forged it?" Say*: *"Then bring ten chapters like it forged and call upon whom you can besides Allãh, if you are truthful." But if they do not answer you, then know that it is revealed by Allãh's knowledge and that there is no god but He*; *will you then submit?* (11:13-14). Ponder on the sentences, "then know that it is revealed by Allãh's knowledge". The challenge was meant to prove that the Qur'ãn was a revelation; that it was not a speech forged by the Apostle; and that it was revealed by Allãh's knowledge and not by the Satãns. The same theme is found in the following verses:

Or, do they say: *"He has forged it." Nay! they do not believe. Then let them bring a talk like it if they are truthful.* (52:33-34). *And the Satãns have not come down with it*; *and it behoves them not, and they have not the power to do* (*it*). *Most surely they are far removed from the hearing* (of it) (26:210-212). On the other hand, this theory *of* "turning away" implies that the reality of the Qur'ãn's miracle was not in its being a revelation from Allãh; the miracle was that Allãh pre-vented the people from bringing a like of it. Again look at the verse: *Or, do they say*: *"He has forged it?" Say*: *"Then bring a chapter like this and call whom you can besides Allãh, if you are truthful." Nay, they have rejected that of which they have no comprehensive knowledge, and its final interpretation has not yet come to*

them . . . (10:38 -39). This verse clearly says that what made them helpless before the Qur'ãn, what made it impossible for them to bring a like *of* even one *of* its chapters, was the fact that it has a final interpretation whose knowledge is reserved for Allãh — a knowledge which they lacked. It is this inherent quality *of* the Qur'ãn which vanquished the adversaries. It was not that they had ability to bring its like but Allãh pre-vented them from doing so. Then, there is the verse: *Do they not then meditate on the Qur'ãn? And if it were from any other than Allãh, they would have found in it many a discrepancy* (4:82). It shows that the miracle is in the inherent quality *of* the Qur'ãn that it was free from discrepancy in its words and meanings — because it is a quality which is not within the power of any creature — not that there was some discrepancy in this Book, but Allãh prevented people from finding it out.

All these Qur'ãnic declarations prove that the theory *of aṣ-ṣarf* has no leg to stand, and one should not take it seriously.

Now we come to the objections mentioned earlier:

It is a fallacious argument that as the language is a product *of* human ingenuity, it can never reach a level which would be beyond the grasp or ability *of* human beings; language, being a product, cannot be more powerful than its producer. The fallacy lies in the fact that what has been invented by man is simple words for particular meanings. But this congruity *of* the words with their meanings does not teach the man how to arrange those words, how to plan, draft and deliver a talk in the best possible way — in a way that the talk reflects the beauty of the meaning as it is in the mind,and the meaning in its turn becomes a mirror of the reality, remains in complete agreement with the fact. It requires a dexterity in the art of eloquence, an adroitness in elocution; also it depends on sharp intelligence and comprehensive knowledge so that the speaker may be fully cognizant of all aspects of the subject matter. It is this skill and knowledge that differs from man to man, and creates difference between talk and talk in their respective

perfection and beauty.

So, there are three aspects of a human talk; Knowledge of language — a man may be having the most comprehensive know-ledge of the words of a language, without being able to speak it; elocutionary skill — a man may be the most accomplished orator, without being cognizant of material and spiritual realities; Know-ledge of realities — a man may be the most learned scientist or theologian without having the ability to express his views and meanings intelligibly. These three factors may be found separately (as mentioned above) and may also combine together in some people. And on them depend the beauty and the eloquence of a speech.

The fist factor — single words for their meanings — has been invented by social instinct of man. But the remaining two depend on intellectual refinement and delicate discernment.

Human perception, intelligence and discernment is limited and restricted. We cannot comprehend all the details of an event, all concomitants of a fact. As a result, we cannot be sure of being right at any time. Furthermore, we are gradually moving from deficiency to perfection, and so is our perception and discernment. Look at any spellbinding orator or enchanting poet; compare his earlier work with his latest and you will see the difference.

In this background, let us look at human speech — any human speech. First, we cannot be sure that it is free from errors of fact and judgement, because, as mentioned above, no speaker can have comprehensive knowledge of all the details and concomitants of an event. Second, it will not be on the same level with speaker's former or later speech. Not only that: Even in the

same speech the beginning will surely be on a level different from
that of the end, although we, probably, will not be able to discern it because of the minuteness of difference.

Now, when we find a decisive speech, based on comprehensive knowledge, and free from all types of discrepancy, we will have to admit that it is not the work of a mortal man. This reality has been described in the following verses: *Do they not then meditate on the Qur'ãn? And if it were from any other than Allãh, they would have found in it many a discrepancy* (4:82); (I swear) *by the heaven endued with rotation, and by the earth splitting* (with plants etc.), *most surely it is a decisive word, and it is not a jest* (86:11-14). Note the adjectives used for the heaven and the earth — they point to the constant changes occur-ring therein, because the oath is about a Book which is free from change and difference, inasmuch as it is based on an unchangeable and lasting reality, that is, its "interpretation". (It is a Qur'ãnic terminology that will be explained in ch. 3.) Also, Allãh says: *Nay! it is a glorious Qur'ãn, in a guarded tablet* (85: 21—22); (I swear) *by the Book that makes manifest* (the truth); *surely We have made it an Arabic Qur'ãn so that you may under-stand. And surely it is in the original of the Book with Us, truly elevated, full of wisdom* (43:2 - 4) ; *But nay!* (*I* swear) *by the falling of stars*; *and most certainly it is a great oath if you only knew*; *most surely it is an honoured Qur'ãn, in a book that is hidden*; *none do touch it save the purified ones. A revelation by the Lord of the worlds* (56:75 - 80).These and other similar verses show that the Qur'ãn is based on established realities that do not change, that are never altered. And, therefore, the Qur'ãn itself is safe from change, alteration and discrepancy.

To come back to the main objection: Accepted that language has been made by men. But it does not mean that there cannot be found a piece of literature that is beyond the

reach of the very men who made the language. Otherwise, we would have to say that a sword-maker must be the bravest of all the swordsmen, the inventor of chess or lute must be the most accomplished chess-master or lutanist!

The perfect eloquence demands that, first, the word should be in complete harmony with the intended meaning, and, second, the conveyed meaning must be in accordance with the establishedfact. How the words fit the meanings? The structural sequence of the words and their parts should perfectly agree with the natural order of the intended meaning and its parts — bringing the man-made language and sentences in total agreement with the nature. (See for details *Dalã'ilu 'l-i'jãz* of ash-Shaykh `Abdu 'l-Qãhir al-Jurjãni.) As for the meaning, it must be correct and true, based on a real fact existing outside our imagination — and that fact should be of permanent value, unchangeable and unalterable. The first quality (the agreement of the word with meaning) depends on this basic quality of the meaning. A very eloquent sweet-sounding jocular speech cannot stand before a serious talk; nor can an eloquent, serious speech — if it is based on wrong premises — be equal to a talk that reflects true facts and comprehensive wisdom.

A speech attains the highest standard of eloquence when its words are sweet, its style free-flowing, its meaning fitting the occasion and its conveyed proposition based on true facts.

Such a talk, based as it is on reality, can never differ with other realities, can never disagree with other truths. Truth and reality is a non-divisible entity. Truth cannot refute another truth; reality cannot oppose another reality. Lie, on the other hand, may be in opposition to another lie as it surely is against the truth. Ponder on the verse: . . . *and what is there after the truth but error* (10:32). Note that truth is singular, there is no division in it. Again Allãh says: . . . *and follow not* (other) *ways, for they will scatter you away from*

His ways . . . (6:153). Lie has many ways, it is not only disunited but also disuniting.

Obviously, there can be no difference whatsoever between one truth and the other; instead, there shall be total union and unison between them — one truth will lead to the other, one reality will guide to the other; thus, one part of the Qur'ãn confirms the others, one sentence testifies for the others.

It is a wonderful quality of the Qur'ãn. Take any verse; it is clear in its meaning; add to it another relevant verse equally clear; and you will find them together pointing to a new reality that was not shown by either verse separately: then put them side by side with a third relevant verse, and you will gain fresh insight into new sublime realities. It is a unique quality of the Qur'ãn, and you will see many examples of this special characteristic in this book. Unfortunately the exegetes had so far neglected this method. Had they followed this way since the early days, they would have discovered by now so much of its hidden treasures.

This lengthy discourse was necessary to show that the two objections laid down against the Qur'ãnic miracle of eloquence were baseless. Miraculous eloquence is not based on words alone. Therefore, it is out of place to say that as it is man who had made the language, how can any speech be above the reach of the man himself? Also, there is no room for the question that as only one out of many possible compositions can be the highest, how is it possible to express one idea in different ways, and then to claim that all were of miraculous standard? Our foregoing explanation has made it clear that the miracle of eloquence depends on meaning — on its agreement with sublime unchangeable reality and on its conformity with the words.

THE REALITY OF MIRACLE: ACCORDING TO THE QUR'ÃN

The Qur'ãn repeatedly asserts the occurrence of miracle — an unusual preternatural phenomenon, which shows the authority of metaphysical forces over the physical and material world. Miracle is not something against self-evident rational truth.

Some people have tried to explain away the verses that describe various miracles; their aim was to make the Qur'ãn fit the principles of modern physical sciences. But such attempts are unacceptable, as they are a forced burden on the language and the Qur'ãn.

We are going to explain, under various headings, what the Qur'ãn teaches us about the meaning and reality of miracle.

1. The Qur'ãn Confirms the General Rule of the Cause-and-Effect

The Qur'ãn says that in this natural world every thing, every effect, has a cause; that there is a system of cause-and-effectpermeating through this world. It is a self-evident reality; and on this truth depend the scientific and academic researches and discussions. Man by nature believes that there must be a cause for every natural phenomenon. Likewise, academic researches try to find out relevant causes for all such happenings. What is a cause? It is such a thing, or a combination of things, that when-ever it occurs, another thing — its effect — unfailingly comes into being. We try to find out by experiments the causes of various things. For example, experience has taught us that if there is any bum, it must have been caused by fire, movement, friction or some such cause. A cause must be unfailable, comprehensive and universal. In other words, whenever and wherever the cause is found, its effect must be found.

This matter is clearly confirmed by the Qur'ãn. It takes this principle for granted when it talks about life, death, sustenance and other heavenly or earthly phenomena — although it ultimately ascribes all the effects, and their causes too, to Allãh.

The Qur'ãn, therefore, confirms the general system of the cause-and-effect; whenever a cause is found (with all its necessary conditions) its effect must come into being, and whenever we see an effect, it surely and unfailingly proves the existence of its cause.

2. The Qur'ãn Affirms Miracles (Super-Natural Events)

The Qur'ãn, nevertheless, narrates many an event that goes against the normal, natural system of the cause-and-effect. It ascribes many super-natural miracles to various prophets, like Nũḥ, Hũd, Ṣãliḥ, Ibrãhīm, Lũṭ, Dãwũd, Sulaymãn, Mũsã, `Isã and Muḥammad (peace of Allãh be on them all!). It should not be forgotten here that those events, although abnormal and uncustomary, were not inherently impossible; they were not like an assertion that 'A positive proposition and its opposite are affirmed together and are negated together'; or like a statement that 'A thing can be separated from its own self'; or that 'One is not a half of two'. We instinctively know that such propositions are impossible, they cannot be.

But the miracles shown by the prophets were not of this category; otherwise, the minds of untold billions of religionists, since the dawn of humanity, would not have accepted them and believed in them. No man accepts an inherently impossible statement, nor does any sane person ascribe such a thing to another.

Moreover, the effects that are called miracle are not unknown to the nature. The natural world is continuously engaged in bestowing on the matter one form after the other, turning one event into another, giving life to the dead, and

death to the living, transforming the misfortune into fortune and the comfort into discomfort. All this is happening daily in the world of nature; the only difference between a natural event and a miraculous one is in the speed and steps required to reach the goal. A natural cause brings about its effect, in special conditions, at a particular time and space, step by step in a long series of changes. The matter present in a walking-stick may one day appear in a running serpent; a disintegrating skeleton may one day become a living man — but in its natural course it will take a very long time, under certain conditions of time and space, with numerous consecutive causes which would constantly change that particular matter from one form to the other, taking it from one step to the next and then to the third and so on, until it appears in the required shape and form. In normal way, it cannot happen without its proper causes, without its necessary conditions; nor can it be brought into being by will-power of a human being. But when it comes to a miracle, it happens just by the will of the prophet, without any material cause and without any lapse of time.

Of course, it is very difficult for a simple mind — as it is for a scientific brain — to understand such super-natural events; man is, after all, accustomed to the natural-causality. On the other hand, no scientist can outright reject occurrence of super-natural phenomena even in this atomic age. Every day someone or the other demonstrates his skill bringing some super-natural events about; people see it, radios and televisions broadcast it, news-papers and magazines publish it; and nobody says that it could not have happened as it was against the laws of nature.

Such phenomena have led many modem scholars to the theory that man, like everything else, is surrounded by unknown magnetic or electric currents; man may, through rigorous training, get control over the surrounding currents, and use them to affect other material things in abnormal and unusual ways, bringing those astonishing feats about.

If this theory is proved correct and all-inclusive, it will

supersede all present theories that explain various happenings and effects in terms of motion and power; it will replace all previous causes with one all-pervasive natural cause: the magnetic currents.

This is their theory. They are right in their belief that every natural phenomenon must have a natural cause if the causal relationship between them is intact.

The Qur'ãn has not identified by name any all-pervasive natural cause that would explain all natural and super-natural events, as it is not within the main purposes of this divine book. But it affirms that every natural phenomenon has a natural cause — by permission of Allãh. In other words, every phenomenon is totally dependent on Allãh, Who has appointed for it a certain procedure, a natural cause through which it gets its existence — the existence that is given by Allãh. Allãh says: *and whoever fears Allãh He will make for him an outlet, and give him sustenance from whence he thinks not*; *and whoever trusts in Allãh, He is sufficient for him*; *surely Allãh attains His purpose*; *Allãh indeed has made a measure for every thing* (65:2- 3). Its first sentence unreservedly declares that whoever fears Allãh and has trust in Him, Allãh is sufficient for him, and He will surely manage his affairs and make him succeed, even if in the normal way it may seem impossible, even if the material causes go against him. It is supported by the following verses: *And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then verily I am very near*; *I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me* (2:186); *Call upon Me*, *I will answer you* (40:60); *Is not Allãh sufficient for His servant?* (39:36).

The next sentence, "surely Allãh attains His purpose", explains the reason of the first declaration. The same theme is found in the verse: . . . *and Allãh is predominant over His affair, but most people do not know* (12:21). This sentence too is all-inclusive and without any condition. Allãh has His own way to let a thing happen, if He so wills — even if the normal ways are

closed, even if usual paths to it are cut off.

This may possibly happen in two ways: First, Allãh may bring that thing into being simply by His will, without resorting to any material or natural cause. Second, there may be an alternative natural cause, unknown to us, which Allãh may have appointed for that phenomenon; it may be hidden from our eyes but the Maker and Creator, Who has prescribed it, knows it and uses it to attain His purpose. This second possibility seems more appropriate in view of the last sentence, "Allãh indeed has made a measure for every thing." This sentence shows that every effect, whether it is in accordance with the normal causality or not, has a measure appointed by Allãh, is related to other beings, has a connection with other things; Allãh may bring that effect into existence through any other related thing, even if the normal cause is absent. What should not be forgotten is the basic fact that it is Allãh Who has bestowed causality on a cause; this relation of cause and effect is not independent of Allãh.

Allãh has created causal relation between various things. He can attain His purpose through any way He wishes. No doubt, there is the system of cause-and-effect in the world; but this chain is in the hands of Allãh, He may use it in any way He wills. There is a real causal relation between a thing and the things that have preceded it; but that reality is not as we know it — that is why no academic or scientific theory is capable of explaining all phenomena of the world; it is really as Allãh knows, makes and manages it.

This basic principle has been referred to in the verses of "decree" or "measure": *And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We do not send it down but in a known measure* (15:21). *Surely We have created every thing according to a measure* (54:49); . . . *and Who created every thing, then ordain for it a measure* (25:2) . *Who created then made complete, and Who made* (things) *according to a measure then guided* (them to theirgoal) (87:2-3). Look also at the following verses: *No misfortune befalls on the earth nor*

in your own souls, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence (57:22). *No affliction comes about but by Allãh's permission*; *and whoever believes in Allãh, He guides aright his heart*; *and Allãh is Cognizant of all things* (64:11).

These verses (and especially the first) show that the things take their particular identity in accordance with a measure appointed for it by Allãh; that measure gives it its individuality and defines it; and that measure and definition precedes the thing and then accompanies it. A thing can be properly delineated only if it is seen in its perspective, clearly defining its relation to all other things. The other related things serve as a mould that gives this item its peculiar shape and particular form. Every material effect is connected with all things which precede or accompany it. All such things together serve as the cause of this effect; and this one in its turn becomes a part of the cause of other effects that come later.

Also, it may be proved from the following two verses: *That is Allãh, your Lord, the Creator of every thing. . .* (40:62); . . . *there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock*; *surely my Lord is on the straight path* (11:56). Add to them the fact that the Qur'ãn confirms the general system of causality — and you will find the complete picture displayed before your eyes.

1. The first verse says that every thing is created by Allãh, and the second one states that creation is on a single pattern; there is no deviation in it as that would cause chaos and disturbance.

2. The Qur'ãn confirms the general system of causality for all material things.

3. It follows that every material thing and effect is invariably always created by a cause — a cause that precedes it and brings it into being. It makes no difference whether it is a normal and usual cause, or a supernatural one. There must always be a cause.

Many usual causes which sometimes fail to bring about the

expected effects are not the real causes. The real causes are those which never fail to create the expected effects. An example may be given of various diseases and their causes; influenza was previously thought to be caused by cold; but cold did not always create it, now it has been discovered that it is caused by a virus. The same is true about many supernatural feats.

3. Whatever is Caused by Natural Causes is Really Caused by Allãh

The Qur'ãn, while affirming the causal relation between a cause and its effect, ascribes every effect to Allãh. The inference is that these normal and usual causes are not independent in creating their effects; the real cause, in the true sense of this word, is only Allãh. Allãh says: *surely His is the creation and the command* (7:54); *Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allãh's* (2:284); *His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth* (57:5); *Say*: *"All is from Allãh"* (4:78). There are numerous such verses showing that everything belongs exclusively to Allãh; He may deal with it in any way He likes; no one else can handle it at all except by permission of Allãh; He allows whomsoever He wishes to manage, influence and effect it to a certain extent. But this divine permission, establishing the relation of causality, does not make that cause independent of Allãh; it is just a permission given by the real owner to use his property. The man having this permission cannot transgress the limits imposed by the owner. Allãh says: *Say*: "O *Allãh, Master of kingdom! Thou givest the kingdom to whomsoever Thou pleasest and takest away the kingdom from whomsoever Thou pleasest* (3:26); *Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation, then guided it* (to its goal) (2:50); . . . *whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His*; *who is he that can intercede with Him but*

by His permission? (2:255); . . . *and He is firmly established on 'Arsh, regulating the affair*; *there is no intercessor except after His permission* (10:3).

The causes do have the causality because Allãh has given it to them. They have got it, but are not independent of Allãh. It is this factor that has been described in above verses as "inter-cession" and "permission". Permission means that there was an impediment which, but for this permission would have hindered the now-authorized agent from interfering in this affair.

In short, every cause has been given the power to create the relevant effect; but the real authority is yet in the hands of Allãh.

4. The Souls of the Prophets do have Influence Over the Super-Natural Events

Allãh says: . . . *and it was not meet for an apostle that he should bring a sign except with Allãh's permission*; *but when the command of Allãh came, judgement was given with truth, and those who treated* (it) *as a lie were lost* (40:78).

The verse shows that it was the apostle who brought the sign — by permission of Allãh. The souls of the prophets were given a special power to cause the miracle; and that causal power, like all other causes, created its effect with permission of Allãh.

Again Allãh says: *And they followed what the Satans chant* (of sorcery) *against the kingdom of Sulaymãn*; *and not that Sulaymãn disbelieved, but* (it was) *the Satans that disbelieved, they taught men sorcery and what was sent down to the two angels at Babylon, Hãrũt and Mãrũt Yet these two taught no one until they had said, "Surely we are only a trial, therefore do not be a disbeliever". Even then men learned from these two that by which they might cause a separation between a man and his wife*; *and they cannot hurt with it any one except with Allãh's permission* (2:102).

This verse proves two things: magic has some reality; and it, not unlike miracle, is caused by a psychical factor of the magician, by permission of Allãh.

Take a miracle, a magic, a mysterious wonder of a saint, or a spell bringing skill acquired through rigorous practice — all these extra-ordinary or super-natural deeds emanate from their agents' psychical factors — or will-power — as the above-mentioned verses have shown. But Allãh has made it clear that the psychical cause found in His apostles, prophets and believers is predominant, has the mastery, over all other causes, in all imaginable conditions; it can never be overpowered. Allãh says: *And certainly Our word has already gone forth in respect of Our servants, the apostles*: *Most surely they shall be the assisted ones, and most surely Our host alone shall be the victorious ones* (37:171-173). *Allãh has written down*: *I will most certainly prevail, I and My apostle* . . . (58:21). *Most surely We help Our apostles and those who believe, in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses shall stand* (40:51). As you see, these verses do not put any condition or restriction on the promised victory; the apostles and the believers shall be victorious over their adversaries in all conditions and situations.

It may be inferred from it that this divine source is something metaphysical, preternatural. Material things are, in their nature, measured and limited; they get the worst of it if they are faced by another thing which is superior in power. But this preternatural spiritual source, which is assisted by the will of Allãh, is never defeated by any factor; whenever it is faced by any material adversary, it is given by Allãh a far more superior power to achieve victory with flying colours.

5. Whatever is Caused by Psychical Power Depends on a Command from Allãh

Read again the last sentence of the verse 40:78, mentioned at

the beginning of the preceding chapter: "but when the command of Allãh came, judgement was given with truth, and those who treated (*it*) as a lie were lost". You will see that the super-natural event caused by the psychical power of the agent depends on a command from Allãh — in addition to His permission. That command may coincide with the said permission, or may be one with it. The command of Allãh is His creation, described by the word 'Be' in the verse: *His command, when He intends anything, is only that He says to it, "Be", and it is* (36:82). Also Allãh says: *Surely this is a reminder, so whoever wishes takes to his Lord a way. And you do not wish except that Allãh wishes*; *surely Allãh is Knowing, Wise* (76:29 -30). *It is naught but a reminder for the worlds, for him among you who wishes to go straight. And you do not wish except that Allãh wishes, the Lord of the worlds* (81:27-29). These verses show that the affairs which are within the sphere of the man's will,and under his control and authority, are still dependent on the divine will for their existence. What these verses say is this: The intentional actions of a man are done by his will; but that will itself depends on the will of Allãh.

The verses do not say that whatever is wished by man is wished by Allãh. Had it been the case, no human wish would have remained unfulfilled — because it would have become the will of Allãh! Also, many verses refute this idea; *And if We had wished We would certainly have given to every soul its guidance . . .* (32:13). *And if your Lord had wished surely all those who are in the earth would have believed* (10:99).

Our will depends on the divine will; our action depends on our will, and also they depend — indirectly, through our will — on the will of Allãh. And both our will and action depend on the command of Allãh — on His word, "Be".

Things, affairs and events may be either natural or super-natural; and the super-natural may be either on the side of good, like miracle, or on that of evil, like magic and sooth saying. But all of them come into being through natural causes,

and at the same time they depend on the will of Allãh. In other words, they cannot come into being unless the natural cause coincides, or becomes one, with the permission and command of Allãh. All things are equal in this respect; but when a prophet brings about a miracle, or a good servant of Allãh prays to Him for a thing, an additional factor, that is, the decisive command of Allãh, is added thereto; and the desired effect or event unfailingly comes into being. Allãh says: *Allãh has written down*: *I will most certainly prevail, I and My apostles* (58:21); *I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me. . .* (2:186). See also other such verses quoted in the preceding chapter.

6. The Qur'ãn Attributes the Miracle to an Invincible Cause

The preceding chapters have made it clear that miracle, like other natural and super-natural things, needs a natural cause; and that all causes depend on some metaphysical causes. All these events and effects may, thus, be divided into four categories:

First: The normal events: They come into being by normal apparent causes which are accompanied by real causes — in most cases those real causes are material ones; and those causes depend on the divine will and. command.

Second: The extra-ordinary events of evil nature, like sorcery and sooth saying: They are caused by natural but unusual and abnormal causes, which are accompanied by the real causes; and those causes depend on the divine permission and will.

Third: The extra-ordinary events of good nature, like a prayer answered by Allãh: They are caused by the natural and real cause, with permission and will of Allãh — but such events do not contain any element of challenge, that is, they do not purport to prove the truth of any call or claim.

Fourth: The miracles: The extra-ordinary, super-natural

events of good character, which are brought about as a challenge, to prove the truth of the call or claim. They too are caused by the natural and real causes with permission and will of Allãh.

The third and fourth categories have an extra quality in them: Their cause is fortified by an invincible factor; it can never be overpowered, as it is always accompanied by the decisive command of Allãh.

Question: It is strange to say that miracle is caused by a natural cause. Suppose, we discover the real natural cause of a miracle; will it not then be possible for us to create that miracle? If yes, then miraculousness would be a relative matter; any action would be a miracle in the eyes of those who are unaware of its cause, but quite an ordinary thing for those who know. In the same way, an event that was believed to be a miracle in dark ages would not be so impressive in this age of science and knowledge. If scientific research found out the real natural causes of the miracles, there would be no miracle at all — and no miracle could be used to prove the truth of the prophet's claim. What all this leads to is this: A miracle is not a proof except against him who is ignorant of its natural cause; therefore, it cannot be put asan evidence of the truth of the prophet's claim.

Reply: Miraculousness of a miracle does not depend on unknown ability of its cause; nor is it a miracle because it emanates from an extraordinary or mysterious cause. It is a miracle because it is brought about by such an extraordinary cause which is invincible, which cannot be overcome, cannot be defeated. Let us look at the case of a seriously sick person, who, all of a sudden, is cured by the prayers of a believer. It is called a miraculous event, because it emanates from an invincible cause. We know that patient could be cured by medical treatment, and it would have been a normal process; but this cause, that is, the medical treatment, could be foiled by other more powerful factors; and that is why it is not called a

miracle.

7. The Qur'ãn Counts Miracle as a Proof of the Truth of the Claim of Prophethood

Question: What is the connection between miracle and veracity of the claim of prophethood? Reason fails to see any binding relation between the two. But the Qur'ãn time and again asserts this concomitancy, as may be seen in the stories of various prophets, for example, Hũd, Ṣãliḥ, Mũsã, 'Isã and Muḥammad (peace of Allãh be on all of them!). The Qur'ãn narrates that no sooner did they announce their claim than they were asked by their people to bring some miracle to prove the truth of their claim; and they responded to it by showing the miracle.

Not only that. Some of them were given their miracle even before their nations had asked them for it. Allãh told Mũsã (a.s.) at the start of his mission: *Go you and your brother with My signs and be not remiss in remembering Me* (20:42). And He says about `Isã (a.s.): *And* (will make him) *an apostle to the children of Israel*: *"That I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I create for you out of dust like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allãh's permission and I heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead to life with Allãh's permission and I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your house*; *most surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers"* (3:49).

The same is the position of the Qur'ãn which was given to the Prophet right at the start of his mission. The reason does not see any connection whatsoever between the truth of the message of an apostle or a prophet on one hand and his ability to show a super-natural sign on the other.

Moreover, the beauty of the principles expounded by the apostles and the prophets, strengthened as it is by irrefutable

proofs, dispenses with the need of any miracle — for an intelligent and knowledgeable person. That is why it is said that miracles are needed for convincing the simple-minded people, because they cannot understand a learned discourse; but knowledgeable persons do not need them.

Reply: The prophets had not brought the miracles to prove any principle of religion, like belief in Oneness of God and the Day of Resurrection etc. — the truth of which could be realized by intellect and reason. They always proved such things with reasoning and logical arguments. For example, Allãh says regarding the existence of the Creator: *Their apostles said*: *"Is there doubt about Allãh, the Master of the heavens and the earth?"*(14:10); and He says about resurrection: *And We did not create the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain*; *that is the opinion of those who disbelieve*; *then woe to those who disbelieve on account of the fire. Shall We treat those who believe an and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth? Or shall We make those who guard* (against evil) *like the wicked?* (38:27-28).

Why were, then, the apostles asked to show miracle, and why did they bring it about? It was to prove that they were in fact sent by Allãh; it was meant to authenticate their claim.

The prophets claimed that they were sent by Allãh, that He had revealed His message to them — either directly or through an angel. It was an assertion of a super-natural event; a claim of a reality beyond the physical senses and mental cognization of their people; a fact above the level of man's perception. If that claim was right, it would be a special metaphysical disposition reserved for the prophets only. The difficulty was that the prophets were like any other human being in their humanity and in its characteristics. How could they be favoured for this especial relationship with the world beyond nature?

The disbelievers, therefore, resorted to two methods to disprove the prophets' claim:

First Method: They tried to refute it through such "argu-

ments" as the following:

a) *They said*: *"You are nothing but human being like us; you wish to turn us away from what our fathers used to worship"* (14:10). The apostles were like all other men; and other men do not receive such divine revelation as was claimed by the apostles. If they could be given revelation from God, why could not others get it as well? Were not all of them alike in their humanity?

The apostles replied to it in these words: *Their apostles said to them*: *"We are nothing but human beings like yourselves, but Allãh bestows* (His) *favours on whom He pleases of His servants . . ."* (14:11). They accepted that they were like all men in their humanity, but showed that apostleship was a very especial favour of Allãh, and He bestows it on whom He pleases. It is not difficult to see that being alike does not preclude some of them from being reserved for some especial favours. Of course, if Allãh had pleased, He could have bestowed it on anyone among them, but He chose for this favour whom He pleased. The same was the thrust of their protest against the Prophet: "*Has the reminder been revealed to him from among us?*" (38:8)

b) Of the same nature, but with added sarcasm, were the following remarks of the polytheists of Mecca: *And they say*: *"Why was not this Qur'ãn revealed to a man of importance in the two towns?"* (43:31) *And they say: "What sort of apostle is this that he eats food and goes about in the marts*; *why has not an angel been sent down to him so that he be a warner with him? Or a treasure be thrown down to him, or be for him a garden from which he may eat!"* (25:7- 8)

What they wanted to say was this: If the Apostle (of Islam) really has been chosen by God to receive divine revelation, then he must be someone above all the mortals. Then why does he require food to eat, and why is he obliged to go about in the markets to earn his livelihood? If he is truly a representative of God, he should have been accompanied by

an angel to assist him in his work, or he should have been given a treasure to save him the trouble of earning his livelihood in the markets, or a garden should have been bestowed on him, so that he would not need a food like ours.

Allãh answered them in these words: *See how they coin comparisons for thee! So they have gone astray, therefore they shall not be able to find a way . . . And We did not send before thee any messengers but they most surely ate food and went about in the markets*; *and We have made some of you a trial for others*; *will you bear patiently? And your Lord is Ever-seeing* (25:9,20). And in reply to their demand for sending down an angel, it was said in another chapter: *And if We had made him angel, We would certainly have made him a man, and We would certainly have made confused to them what they make confused* (6:9).

c) Going further, they raised their demands even higher: *And those who do not hope for Our meeting, say*: *"Why have not angels been sent down upon us, or* (why) *do we not see our Lord?" Now certainly they are too proud of themselves and have revolted a great revolt* (25:21). According to their thinking, there was no difference between them and the Prophet; all were human beings. Then why should he be reserved for this office of apostleship? They too should be visited by angels; or, even better, they should see the Lord. Allãh replied to them: *On the day when they shall see the angels, there shall be no joy on that day for the guilty, and they shall say*: *"It is a forbidden thing totally prohibited"* (25:22). It means that if they persist in their disbelief, they shall not see the angels except at the time of death, and then they shall not find any joy in it. The same thing has been mentioned in another verse: *And they say*: *"*O *you to whom the Reminder has been revealed! you are most surely insane. Why do you not bring to us the angels if you are of the truthful ones?" We do not send the angels but with truth, and then they would not be respited* (15:6-8).

d) This last verse shows us one more twist of their

"arguments". The Prophet, according to their thinking, was truthful in his claim of revelation, but he was insane; whatever news he brought was a product of his unstable mind and was, therefore, not correct. The same "argument" was put against Nũḥ (a.s.), as the Qur'ãn says: . . . *and they called* (Nũḥ) *mad, and he was driven away* (54:9).

These were the variations of their "arguments" against the claims of the Prophet, the arguments which were based on similarity of the prophets and their people in their humanity.

Second Method: It was to reject outright the claim of the prophets, and demand from them proof of their veracity, asking them to bring some signs to show that they were in fact representatives of Allãh and recipients of His revelation.

The apostles and the prophets claimed a distinction which was intangible and unknowable to their people. They claimed that they were given apostleship and/or prophethood; that they were spoken to by Allãh — either directly or through angels. Now, such a claim could not be verified by any test or experiment. It could be objected against in two ways: (i) There was no proof that such a claim was true; (ii) there was proof that it was not true. Revelation, divine speech, (and the resulting *shari`ah* and religious discipline) could not be experienced by anyone other than the claimant; the normal system of cause and effect was against it. If such a claim were true, it would mean that the Prophet was in direct contact with the world beyond nature; he was tuned to the divine power — the power that can change the course of nature, can make the effect appear without their usual causes. In that case, he should be able to produce some another tangible super-natural effect; after all one super-natural event is like any other super-natural event so far as the divine authority is concerned. If Allãh spoke to the Prophet — a super-natural

effect — He should show on his hands some other tangible super-natural effects in order to prove the truth of his former claim, that is, the claim that he receives revelation from God. If God wanted to guide the people aright by means of a super-natural thing, that is, revelation, then let Him prove the truth of His Prophet by means of another super-natural, that is, miracle.

That was why the people asked for miracles whenever a prophet was sent to them. They wanted miracles to verify his claim of prophethood, and not to ensure the truth of his teachings. Suppose a man is sent by a ruler to his subjects with his commands and laws. He reaches his destination and they ask him for his credentials. Will they be satisfied if, at this juncture, he starts explaining the wisdom underlying each rule and regulation? Certainly not. They will say: All that you have said, just shows that these rules are based on wisdom and meant for our good; but it does not prove in any way that they are from our ruler, nor that you are his deputy authorized to manage our affairs on his behalf. We shall believe in your claim only when you show us a credential to this effect, for example, an appointment letter duly signed by the ruler and having his official seal. It is as the polytheists had said to the Prophet: ". . . *until you bring down to us a book which we may read*" (17:93).

From the above explanation, two things become abundantly clear:

First: Miracle has an inseparable .connection with the truth of the claim of prophethood. Learned and ignorant, elite and common, all men need miracle in order to be able to accept the truth of a prophet's claim.

Second: What the prophet receives and perceives of the revelation is entirely different from those things which we feel by senses or comprehend by intellect. In plain words, revelation is not a function of mind; it is a reality totally separate from "right thinking". This fact is brilliantly clear

from the Book of Allãh; and no one, having an iota of common sense, can entertain any doubt about it.

But in recent times some “scholars” have closed their eyes from this reality, and tried to reinterpret the spiritual facts and divine knowledge in the light of the natural sciences. They have, accordingly, based their explanations on materialistic theory. They believe that human perception and comprehension is a characteristic of matter, emanating from the brain. They are of the opinion that all real merits and perfections — whether of an individual or of a group — are developments of matter only. Based on these premises, they have explained prophethood and all related spiritual factors on the following materialistic lines:

Prophethood is a sort of a sharp mental power, an intellectual genius. The genius who is called prophet, looks at the social conditions of his nation; analyses what they have inherited of the beliefs, ideas, customs and superstitions; and then changes them to conform with the needs of his time and place, in the most suitable manner. In that light, he frames for them the basic social principles and ordains practical rules and regulations — in order to raise their standard of life, to elevate their morality and ethics, to make them better members of society. Basing on this hypothesis, they have declared that:

1) Prophet is an intellectual genius, who calls his people to the good of their social life.

2) Revelation is the good thought which comes into his mind.

3) Divine book is the collection of those good thoughts and ideas, inasmuch as they are free from personal desires and selfish motives.

4) Angels who, the prophet says, come to him, are only the natural material forces which keep the world going. Or, they are psychological traits which lead the man to his perfection.

The Holy Ghost is a higher development of those

material forces, which rains those pure ideas on the prophet's mind.

Satan is a retrogression of the same material forces, which poisons the minds with evil thoughts and incites the people to anti-social deeds.

In the same vein they have explained away all the realities which the prophets have told us about — like the Tablet, the Pen, the Throne, the Chair, the Book, the Reckoning, the Garden, and the Fire.

5) Religions are products of times; they change with the times.

6) The miracles, attributed to the prophets, are nothing more than myths and fictions; which were forged in the interest of religion, to strengthen the belief of common people; or to enhance the prestige of religious leaders in the eyes of their followers.

This in short is their explanation. But prophethood, in this meaning, should rather be called a political device than a divine reality. It is not possible here to throw light on its various facets. What the readers, however, should not overlook is that this interpretation has no resemblance whatsoever to what has been de-scribed in the Books of Allãh and the traditions of the prophets. What led these "scholars" to such interpretations was their total submission to materialistic theories; that was why they rejected every metaphysical reality, and tried to bring it down to the level of lifeless matter.

Such peoples are academic descendants of an earlier group: Many early theologians interpreted every religious reality — the Throne, the Chair, the Tablet, the Pen, the Angels etc. — in material terms, adding, at the same time, that those things existed beyond the grasp of our senses. Needless to say that that interpretation was not based on any actual experiment or sensual perception. Now that the area of physical sciences has expanded so much, and every thing is being analysed, tested and experimented on, this later generation was obliged

to reject the idea of physical existence of those religious realities, because, as mentioned above, their existence could not be proved by any test or experiment. Therefore, they had to invent other meanings for those realities, well within the area of sensual perception. They thought that they were serving the cause of religion in this way — because their interpretation would bring those realities within the sensual and physical recognition, and thus save them from being totally rejected by modern scholars.

Both groups have strayed from the right path. The ancient theologians correctly understood the meanings of these words, without resorting to any allegorical interpretation. But they erred when they thought that those were material things although beyond the purview of sensual perception, not subjected to the laws of matter.

The modern scholars took the wrong way from the very start; they gave these words wrong meanings in their eagerness to makethem conform with material realities; in their attempt to pull these sublime truths down to the level of physical experience.

The correct way is to explain these words according to the dictates of the language and the usage; then shall come the stage of identifying what, how and where, for example, the Pen is. This should be done with the help of other relevant verses. After the Pen is identified, it may be compared with current scientific ideas to check whether it goes against them. If that examination reveals that the identified entity was beyond the domain of matter, then it should not be proved, or disproved, by the principles of physical sciences. The science is concerned with material and physical things. What authority has it got to judge metaphysical or spiritual things? Can we allow a linguist to prove, or disprove, a proposition of astronomy by the rules of grammar? If not, then why should the rules of physical sciences be applied to prove, disprove or interpret metaphysical realities?

QUR'ÃN: *But if you do* (it) *not — and never shall you do* (it) *— then be on guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel*; *it is prepared for the unbelievers. And convey good news to those who believe and do good deeds, that for them are gardens in which rivers flow*; *whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say*: *"This is what was given to us before*;*" and they shall be given the like of it, and they shall have pure mates in them*; *and in them they shall abide.*

The chapter began with description of three groups: the pious ones, the disbelievers and the hypocrites. But then all of them were joined together by the words, "O men!", calling them to worship Allãh. In this context, they could be divided in two groups only: those who answered this call (i.e. the believers) and those who did not answer it (i.e. the disbelievers). The hypocrites do not come into this picture, probably because in their appearance they are with the first group, while in reality they are included in the second. Perhaps, that is why the previous designation of the first group (*those who guard against evil*) has been changed here for "those who believe".

"al-Waqũd" (اَلوَقُودُ) is fuel. The verse says that man himself is the fuel of the hell. He is his own fuel, to keep the fire burning, and to get himself burned in that fire. Allãh says: *then in the fire shall they be burned* (40:72). *It is the fire kindled by Allãh, which rises above the hearts* (104:6-7). Man shall be burned in a fire that will be kindled and fuelled by his own self.

The next verse, 2:25, runs parallel to it and we find the same principle at work here also: "whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say: `This is what was given to us before;' and they shall be given the like of it". It indicates that man shall get there only what he has himself pre-pared here. The Prophet has said: "As you live so

you will die, and as you die so you will be raised." But the people of the paradise have a pleasant distinction vis-à-vis the

people of the fire, because they shall be given ever-increasing rewards by their Lord: *They have therein what they wish and with Us is more yet* (50:35).

" . . . of which men and stones are the fuel": The stones referred to here are the idols which the disbelievers worshipped. Allãh says: *Surely you and what you worship besides Allãh are the firewood of hell . . .* (21:98).

" . . . they shall have pure mates in them": The adjective "pure", inasmuch as it qualifies the "mates", refers to purity from all such things as may create aversion and unpleasantness – whether in their bodies or in their behaviour. In other words, the mates given to the believers in paradise

will be free from every disagreeable characteristic or trait.

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣadũq narrates that aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) was asked about this verse and he said: "The pure mates are the ones who shall be free from menstruation and other excrements."

The Author says: Some other traditions have expanded the meaning to include cleanliness from all defective traits, all characteristics causing aversion.

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إِنَّ اللهَ لا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلاً ما بَعُوضَةً فَما فَوْقَها فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ ماذا أَرادَ اللهُ بِهذا مَثَلاً يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيراً وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيراً وَما يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلاَّ الْفاسِقِينَ ــ ٢٦. الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ ما أَمَرَ اللهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولئِكَ هُمُ الْخاسِرُونَ ــ ٢٧.

Surely Allãh is not ashamed to set forth any parable — (that of) ***a gnat or any thing above that; then as for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord, and as for those who disbelieve, they say***: ***"What is it that Allãh means by this parable?" He causes many to err by it and many He leads aright by it, but He does not cause to err by it*** (any) ***except the transgressors*** (26)***, who break the covenant of Allãh after its confirmation and cut asunder what Allãh has ordered to be joined, and make mischief in the land; these it is that are the losers*** (27)***.***

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COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *Surely Allãh is not ashamed . . .*: Gnat or mosquito is one of the smallest animals perceptible by naked eyes. These two verses run parallel to verses 19-21 of ch. 13: *Is then he who knows that what has been sent down to you from your Lord is the truth like unto him who is blind? Only those possessed of understanding shall bear in mind, those who fulfil the promise of Allãh and do not break the covenant, and those who join that which Allãh has bidden to be joined, and fear Allãh and fear the evil reckoning.*

The verse clearly shows that there is a straying, a blindness, which afflicts the man as a result of his evil deeds; it is different from that initial straying and blindness which the man opts for by his own free will. Look at the sentence, "but He does not cause to err by it (any) except the transgressors". They transgressed first, and it was only then that Allãh made them go astray.

Guidance and misguidance are two comprehensive words; they encompass every felicity and infelicity that comes from Allãh to His good and wicked servants respectively. As Allãh describes in the Qur'ãn, He makes His good servants live a happy life, strengthens them with the spirit of faith, bring them out of the darkness into the light, and gives them a light by which they walk among the people; He has taken them under His protection and guardianship, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve; He is with them, answers them when they call on Him, and remembers them when they remember Him; and the angels come down to them with good news of eternal peace.

Diametrically opposed to it is the condition of evil-doers. Allãh causes them to err, takes them out of the light into the darkness, sets a seal upon their hearts and hearings, and a covering over their eyes; He alters their faces turning them on

their backs; places chains on their necks and these reach up to their chins, so they have their heads raised aloft, and makes a barrier before them and a barrier behind them, then He covers them over so that they cannot see; He appoints for them the Satans to become their associates, and they turn them away from the right path while they think that they are guided aright; those Satans make their misdeeds to seem good to them and they are their guardians; Allãh leads them on by steps from whence they perceive not; and yet He respites them, but His plan is firm; He makes a plan for them and leaves them alone in their rebellion, blindly wandering on.

These are some examples of the conditions of the two groups. On deeper consideration, it appears that man, in this world, lives two lives: there is this life which may be seen and perceived by all, and there is another life hidden behind this one; that hidden life is either good or bad — depending on his faith and deeds. Man will become aware of that hidden life when the veil of secrecy will be removed after death. Then he will see himself in his true form.

Further, it appears from the Qur'ãnic verses that man has had a spiritual life before the life of this world; and he shall have another life after this one. In other words, man has been given three lives — this life in this world is the second one, there was one preceding it and there will be another following. The condition of the third life shall be determined by that of this second life — which, in its turn, is governed by the first one.

Many exegetes have explained away the verses about the first life; they say that it is only a literary style, which presents imaginary pictures as real facts. And as for the verses concerning the life hereafter, they too are misrepresented as allegories and metaphors. But both types of verses are too clear in this meaning to allow such misinterpretations.
We shall explain the verses about the first life under ch. 7. As for the life hereafter, many verses show that the same good or bad deeds which man commits in this life, shall be returned to

him, as their own reward or punishment, on the day of requital. Allãh has mentioned this fact in many verses: . . . *and do not make excuses today; you shall be recompensed only what you did* (66:7) ; *then every soul shall be paid back in full what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.* (2: 281) ; *then be on guard against the fire of which men and stones are fuel* (2:24) ; *Then let him summon his council, We too would summon the tormentors* (of the hell) (96 :17 -18) ; *On the day that every soul shall find present what it has done of good and what it has done of evil . . .* (3:30) *; . . . they eat nothing but fire into their bellies . . .* (2:174);. . . *surely they only swallow fire into their bellies . . .* (4:10). There are many verses of the same import.

Then there is the verse 50:22, which by itself is enough to convince one of this principle: *Certainly you were heedless of it, but now We have removed from you your veil, so your sight today is sharp.* The words, "you were heedless of it", indicate that there was something present in this world, to which the guilty one has not paid any attention; "removed from you your veil" means that, but for that veil, he could have seen that reality even in this worldly life. What the man would see on the Day of Resurrection was present even in this earthly life; otherwise, it would not be logical to say that previously you were inattentive to it, or that it was hidden from your eyes, but now that the cover has been removed, you may see it clearly.

There is no allegory or metaphor in these verses. Try to explain in plain Arabic the principle which we have mentioned just now. You will not find a more explicit way than the one used in these verses. Then, how can they be explained away as allegories?

The divine talk here points at two realities:

First: Recompense: What a man will get in hereafter — reward or punishment, paradise or hell — shall be in

recompense of the good or evil he would have done in this life.

Second: Embodiment of the deeds: Many verses indicate that the good or evil deeds themselves turn into their own pleasant or unpleasant recompense. (Or, that the recompense is an inseparable concomitant of the deeds themselves.) It is hidden from our eyes in this life, but we shall see it clearly on the day of reckoning.

These realities are not really two. But we had to explain it in this way to bring it nearer to the minds. The Qur'ãn too says that it uses similitude to make people understand.

QUR'ÃN: *but He does not cause to err by it* (any) *except the transgressors*: *"al –Fisq"* (الفِسقُ = transgression, sinfulness). It is the Qur'ãn that, first of all, used this word in its now prevalent meaning. It is derived from *fasaqati 't-tamrah* (فَسَقَتِ التَّمرَةُ = the date broke out of its outer rind). That is why it has been further explained by the words, "who break the covenant of Allãh after its confirmation" — a thing must be whole before it is broken. Also the transgressors are described at the end of the verse as the losers — one must be owning a thing before he can lose it. Allãh further says: *Surely the losers are they who have lost themselves and their people on the resurrection day* (42:45). All these expressions show how appropriate the adjective, "*al-fãsiqīn*" (اَلفَاسِقِيْنَ = the transgressors) is in this context.

You should never think that the adjectives used by Allãh in His book for His good servants (like "those who are near to Allãh", "the sincere ones", "the humble ones", "the good ones", "the purified ones" etc.) or for the evil ones (like "the unjust", "the transgressors", "the losers", "those who go as-tray", etc.) are cheap epithets, or that they are used as literary embellishment. Each adjective has its own significance; each points to a particular stage in man's spiritual journey. Each has its own characteristics, and gives rise to its especial

effects and consequences. On physical level, every age has its own characteristics and powers, which cannot be found before or after that age; likewise, on spiritual plane, every attribute has its own special effects.

AN ESSAY ON COMPULSION AND DELEGATION

The sentence, "but He does not cause to err by it (any) except the transgressors", explains how Allãh manages the actions of His servants. Does He compel them to act in a pre-determined way? Or, has He delegated to them all powers in this respect? It is better to solve this knotty problem here and now, by the guidance of the Qur'ãn.

Allãh says: *Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allãh's* (2;284); *His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth* (57:5) *; to Him belongs the kingdom, and to Him is due* (all) *praise* (64:1). These and other similar verses prove that to Allãh belongs the whole universe; His ownership is unconditional and unlimited. A man owns a thing, let us say, a donkey; he may use it and take its advantage to a certain extent- only. For ex-ample, he may ride it or use it as a beast of burden; but he can-not starve it to death, nor can he bum it alive. Why? Because his ownership is not absolute; society would condemn him if he were to commit such atrocities. His ownership allows him certain advantages only; and not every possible use.

But when we say that Allãh is the Owner of the worlds, we mean absolute, real and unrestricted ownership. There is no owner except Allãh; the things own, or control, for themselves neither any harm nor any profit, neither life, death no resurrection. It is only Allãh who owns and controls every affair of every creature; He may do with them whatever He pleases; no one can ask Him why; He cannot be blamed or questioned for anything He does, because He is the absolute Owner. He has, of course, allowed some of His creatures to

use some other things to a certain limits; but both the user and the used are His property; and the user cannot exceed the authorized limit. Allãh, as the absolute Owner, cannot be questioned about His dispositions; but others have to give account of how they exercised their authority. Allãh says: *who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission?* (2: 255) ; *there is no intercessor except after His permission* (10:3) ; . . . *that if Allãh please He would certainly guide all the people?* (13 :31) ; *And if Allãh please He would certainly make you a single nation, but He causes to err whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases* . . . (16:93) ; *And you do not please except that Allãh please* (76:30) ; *He cannot be questioned concerning what He does and they shall be questioned* (21:23). Allãh disposes and manages His property in any way He pleases; no one can use any other thing except with His permission, because He is the real Owner and Sustainer of every thing.

Now we come to the rules and laws which Allãh ordains for His creatures. He uses the same method which has been adopted by the human society — ordaining what is good and praising and rewarding its doers; forbidding what is bad and condemning and punishing its doers. For example, He says: *If you give alms openly, it is well* (2:271), . . . *evil is a bad name after faith* (49:11). Obviously, the laws ordained by Allãh look at the good of man, and aim at perfecting the human society. Allãh says: . . . *answer* (the call of) *Allãh and His Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life* (8:24) *; that is better for you, if you know* (61:11); *Surely Allãh enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good* (to others) *and the giving to kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion* (16:90); *Surely Allãh does not enjoin indecency* (7:28). There are many such verses; and they show that the principles which the laws are based upon are always the same — be it a divine commandment or a human legislation. What is good in itself

and ensures the good of the society is allowed, enjoined and prescribed; and what is evil in itself and endangers the social structure is forbidden; man is praised and rewarded for doing the former, and blamed and punished for doing the later. Some of those principles are as follows:-

People do whatever they do because of its underlying wisdom and good. Legislation of laws is no exception to this rule; the laws too are made because of their underlying good and benefit. They reward the law-abiding citizens and chastise, if they so wish, the law-breakers. The said recompense must be correlated to the action done — in its quantity and quality. Also, it is accepted that the enjoinment and prohibition can be addressed to him only who is not under any duress or compulsion who has got freedom of will and choice. The above-mentioned recompense too is related to such actions only which emanate from free will and choice. Of course, if someone, by his own action, puts himself in a tight corner, in a difficult position where he has to transgress a law, he may be justly punished for that transgression, and his plea of helplessness will not be heeded at all.

Allãh uses these same principles in His dealing with His creatures. He does not compel the man to obey or to disobey the divine commands. Had there been any compulsion, rewarding the obedient ones with the paradise and punishing the disobedient ones with the hell would have been absolutely wrong: the reward would have been an unprincipled venture, and the punishment an unmitigated oppression and injustice — and all of it is evil according to reason. Moreover, it would mean favouring one against the other without any justification, without any cause — and this too is a demerit according to reason. Furthermore, it would provide the aggrieved party with a valid argument against Allãh; but Allãh says: . . . *so that people should not have an argument against Allãh after the* (coming of) *apostles* (4:165); . . . *that he who would perish might perish by clear proof, and he who would*

live might live by clear proof (8:42).

The above discourse makes the following points clear :

First: Divine laws are not based on compulsion. These rules have been made for the good of man in this life and the hereafter. And they have been prescribed for him because he has freedom of will, he may obey the rule if he so wishes, and may disobey if he so chooses. He will be fully recompensed for what-ever good or bad he does by his free will.

Second: There are things and actions which are not in conformity with the divine sanctity, yet the Qur'ãn attributes them to Allãh, like misleading, deceiving, scheming against some-one, leaving him wandering on in his rebellion, letting the Satan overpower the man and become his associate. All these actions are related to various kinds of misleading and misguidance. But Allãh is above all defects and demerits, and, therefore, these words when attributed to Him, should convey a meaning in keeping with His sacred name. Initial misleading, even in the sense of making inattentive and forgetful, cannot be ascribed to Allãh. What the above-mentioned expressions actually mean is this: When someone by his own free will, opts to go astray, chooses the wrong path and commits sins, then Allãh leaves him in that straying, and, thus, increases his error — it is done as a punishment of his wrong choice. Allãh says: *He causes many to err by it and many He leads aright, by it, but He does not cause to err by it* (any) *except the transgressors* (2:26). . . . *when they turned aside, Allãh made their hearts turn aside* (61:5). *Thus does Allãh cause him to err who is extravagant, a doubter* (40:34).

Third: The divine decree does not cover the actions of the man inasmuch as they are attributed to him — they are done by the doer, although not created by him. We shall further explain it later.

Fourth: Now that it has been seen that the divine law is not based on compulsion, it should be clearly understood that it is not based on delegation of power either. How can a

“master” issue an authoritative command if he has delegated all his powers to the servant. In other words, this theory of delegation negates the comprehensive ownership of Allãh *vis-à-vis* many of His possessions.

TRADITIONS

A great number of traditions (narrated from the Imams of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* — a.s.) says: “There is neither compulsion nor delegation (of power), but (there is) a position between these two (extremes)."

It is reported in *`Uyunu 'l-akhbãr,* through several chains: When the Leader of the faithful, `Ali ibn Abi Ṭãlib (a.s.) returned from Ṣiffīn, an old man (who has participated in that battle) stood up and said : “O Leader of the faithful ! Tell us about this journey of ours, was it by Allãh's decree and measure?” The Leader of the faithful said: “Yes, O Shaykh! By Allãh you did not ascend any elevation, nor did you descend to any valley but by a decree of Allãh and by His measure.” The old man, there-upon said : “I leave to Allãh all my troubles (of this journey), O Leader of the faithful!” (`Ali — a.s.) replied: “Have patience, O Shaykh! Perhaps you take it to mean a firm decree and a compulsory measure! If it were so, then there would be no justification of reward or punishment, no sense of command, prohibition or admonition, no meaning of promise or threat; there would not be any blame on an evil-doer nor any praise for a good-doer. Nay, the good-doer would have been rather more deserving of blame than the evil-doer, and the evil-doer rather more worthy of grace than the good-doer. (Beware!) this is the belief of the idol-worshippers and the enemies of the Beneficent God (who are) the Qadariyyah of this *ummah* and its Majũs. O Shaykh! Verily Allãh ordained (the *sharī‘ah*) giving freedom of will (to men) and prohibited (evil) to keep us on guard; and He gave plentiful (reward) on meagre (deeds); and He was not disobeyed by being overpowered, nor was He obeyed by

compulsion; and He did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in vain; that is the opinion of those who disbelieve on account of the fire."

The author says: The topics of the speech of Allãh and His decree and measure were among the earliest about which the Muslims differed among themselves. This second dispute may be described as follows:

The eternal divine will govern every thing in the universe. These things are transient in their quiddity; but when they do exist, they do so because the will of Allãh decreed their existence — and in this way their existence becomes essential — otherwise, the divine decree would be meaningless. Conversely, when a thing does not exist, it is because Allãh did not decree its existence — and in this way its existence becomes impossible — otherwise, the divine will would be meaningless. In short, whatever exists, exists because Allãh has decreed its existence, -thus turning it into an essential being. This principle applies everywhere. But the difficulty arises when it comes to such a human action that issues from our own will and choice. We know that we can do it if we so desire, and can ignore it if we so wish. Their doing and not doing is equally possible to us. The balance is tipped in favour of either side by our own will and choice. Our actions are based on our choice, and our will brings them into existence. The difficulty that arises at this point is this: We have earlier seen that nothing comes into being without the will and decree of Allãh, which turns the thing into an essential being — if so, then how can any action of ours be termed as "possible" one? It must exist because the divine will has decreed it ! Moreover, how can our will affect it in any way when it is governed by the will of Allãh? Also, in this background, it cannot be said that man had power to do a certain work before he did it. And, because he did not have that power, Allãh could not give

him any order or command for or against that work. Going a step further, if Allãh gave him an order and he did not comply, it would mean that Allãh Himself had not wanted that thing to happen; so it was impossible for it to happen. Then the question would arise: How could Allãh order him to perform an impossible task? Conversely, if someone complied with that order, it was because Allãh Himself wanted it to happen. Then why should the man be rewarded without any valid reason? By the same reasoning, a sinner should not be punished, as it would be against justice, a naked oppression. One may go on enumerating the difficulties arising out of this subject. A large number of Muslims felt obliged to admit, and believe in, all these absurdities. They said that:

Man does not have power to do a work before the time comes to do it. The reason has nothing to do with the merit or demerit of any action. Whatever Allãh does becomes good; and whatever He forbids becomes evil.

Accordingly, Allãh may choose an action without any justification; He may give reward without any cause; He may ordain laws beyond the capacity of the doer or agent; He may inflict punishment on a disobedient servant even though the said disobedience and transgression was not of his doing .

It appears that the old man, who had asked the question, thought that the belief in the divine will and decree meant that there was no merit or demerit in any action and that man had no right of any reward (or punishment). Naturally he was disappointed when he heard that the journey was by the decree of Allãh; that is why he said: “I leave to Allãh all my troubles.” What he meant was this: My journey to Ṣiffīn and back and my fighting in the way of Allãh had no benefit for me as it was governed and done by the will of Allãh; my share in all this venture was only the trouble and the inconvenience which I underwent. Therefore, I shall leave it to Allãh to balance my account, as it was He Who put me through all these troubles. The Imam (Ali) replied to him by saying, “If it were so, there would be no justification of reward or punishment . . .” The

Imam pointed to the rational principle on which the legislation is based. And at the end he reasoned that Allãh did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in vain. If Allãh could will the man's actions in a way as to deprive him of his freedom of will and choice, it would mean that He could do things without any purpose and aim; then He could create the whole creation aimlessly and in vain. This in its turn would render the principle of resurrection and reward and punishment invalid too.

It is narrated in *at-Tawhīd* and *`Uyunu 'l-akhbãr* that ar-Riḍã (a.s.) was asked about compulsion and delegation, and he said: "Should I not teach you in this regard a principle by which you shall never differ (among yourselves), and no one will argue with you on this subject but that you shall defeat him (by it)?" We said: "(Teach it to us) if you so please." Thereupon he said: "Verily Allãh is not obeyed through compulsion, nor is He disobeyed by overpowering; and He did not leave the servants remiss in His kingdom; He (still) owns what He has given into their possession, and has power on what He has put into their power. Now, if the servants decided to obey Him, He would not prevent them from it, nor would he put any obstruction to it; and if they decided to disobey Him, then if He pleased to bar their way to it He would do so, and if He did not hinder it and they committed it, then it was not He Who led them into that (sin)." Then the Imam said : "Whoever would accurately delineate the boundaries of this speech would surely overcome his adversary."

The author says: Why did "al-Mujabbirah" (اَلْمُجَبِّرَةُ = the believers in compulsion) say what they said? It was because they pondered on the divine decree and measure, and it led them to the conclusion that when Allãh decrees a thing it must happen inescapably. Their deliberation of this subject was correct, and so was the conclusion arrived at. Where they fell in error was in correlating that conclusion

with reality; they did not understand the difference between a reality and an idea based on subjective approach; they forgot the distinction between essentiality and possibility.

It is correct to say, on the basis of the divine decree and measure, that nothing happens in this world unless it turns an essential being; it is because every thing and every affair comes into being when it is decreed by Allãh, according to the measure prescribed by Him; and then it cannot fail to happen, otherwise the decree of Allãh would fail. At the same time, it should be kept in mind that a transient or possible thing becomes essential because of its sufficient cause. When looked at in conjunction with its sufficient cause, it would be called "essential"; but separated from that cause, it would remain as it was before — a transient or possible thing. Let us look at an action of man which he does by his free will and choice. When we look at it in relation to all things that are necessary to bring it into being — knowledge, will, proper tools and organs, the material, formal, efficient and final causes, and all the conditions of time and space — it will become an essential being; and it is in this context that it becomes subject of the eternal divine will. In other words, it becomes an essential being when all aspects of its sufficient cause are complete. But, looked in relation to each of those aspects separately, it remains only a transient and possible thing. If it is seen *vis-à-vis* its efficient cause only, that is, in relation to the doer only, it will retain its characteristics of transience and possibility — it will not become an essential being.

It is now clear to see at which point the believers in "compulsion" have deviated from the right path. They thought that, inasmuch as the human action was subject to the divine will and decree, man had no power on it; he was not a free agent; he was rather a helpless tool in divine hands. But they did not take into consideration the fact that the divine will takes it into hand only when all aspects of its sufficient cause are complete, and not before that. The divine will decrees that a certain action be

done by Zayd — not unconditionally, but on the condition that it is done by Zayd's free will, at a certain time and a certain place. Therefore, its relation to the divine will itself demands that it should be an action of a free agent, done by his own free will and choice.

Doubtlessly, that action will be called an "essential" one if seen in relation to the divine will; but at the same time and by virtue of the same divine will, it will be a possible and transient action when related to the doer, that is, the man. In other words, there are two wills — the human and the divine; they do not run parallel to each other; the divine will comes after and above the human will — they are in a vertical, and not a horizontal position to each other. Therefore, there is no competition or collision between the two wills. It was a short-sightedness on part of the believers in compulsion to negate the human will in order to establish the divine one.

The Mu`tazilites said that human actions are done by man's free will. But they went to the other extreme, and fell in an error no less objectionable than that of al-Mujabbirah. They too said that if human action was subjected to the divine will man would not have any freedom of will and choice. And then they took a position diametrically opposed to that of al-Mujabbirah, and came to the conclusion that the divine will had no relation whatsoever to the human action. Thus they had to accept another creator — the man himself — for human actions. In this way, they accepted dualism without knowing what they were doing. Going further they fell into traps more harmful than the belief of al-Mujabbirah. As the Imam has said: "The poor al-Qadariyyah, they wanted to emphasize the justice of Allãh, so they removed Him from His power and authority . . ."

A master, showing kindness to one of his slaves, married him to a slave-girl of his; he bestowed on him a property, gave him a well-furnished house and provided him with all the necessities of life. Then there came some people there,

looked at his property, and began arguing among themselves. Someone said: “Even though the master has given this property to his slave and has made him its owner, the slave has no right in, or authority over, this property at all. Does any slave own any thing? The slave together with all his belongings belongs to the master."

Another said : “No. You are wrong. The master has bestowed on this slave the right of property. Now the slave is its absolute owner, and the master has lost all his rights, and authority over this property. We may say that he has abdicated in favour of his slave.”

The former was the opinion of al-Mujabbirah; the later that of the Mu`tazilites.

But both were wrong. The correct view would have been to say: The master has got his status of mastership; the slave his position of servitude and bondage. The master has made the slave owner of his (i.e., master's) property. The property belongs to the master at the same time that it belongs to the slave. There are two ownerships — one over the other. This is what the Imams of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (a.s.) have taught us to believe, and what the reason supports.

`Abãyah ibn Rib‘i al-Asadi asked Ali, the Leader of the faithful, the meaning of “capability”. The Leader of the faithful asked a counter question: “Do you have that capability without God or with God?” When `Abayah remained silent, he told him, “Tell me, O `Abayah!” He said: “What should I say? O Leader of the faithful!” He said : “You should say that you have got that capability by (grace of) Allãh, to Whom it belongs and not to you. If He made you its owner, it would be of His bounties, and if He took it away from you, it would be a trial from Him; and He is the Owner of what He gave into your possession, and has power over what He put under your power . . .” (*al-Iḥtijãj*)

The author says: Its meaning may be understood from the preceding explanation.

al-Mufīd reports in his *Sharḥu 'l-'aqã'id*: It has been narrated from Abu 'l-Ḥasan, the third, (a.s.) that he was asked whether the actions of the servants were created by Allãh. He (a.s.) said : "If He were their creator, He would not have disowned their liability. And He (Allãh) has said: *Verily, Allãh is free from liability to the idolaters* . . . (9:3). It does not mean that Allãh was not responsible for the creation of the idolaters; what Allãh has disowned any responsibility of, is their idol-worship and their evils."

The author says: There are two aspects of a deed — its actual existence, and its relation to its doer. It is only when an action is seen in relation to its doer that it is called obedience or disobedience, good or bad, virtue or sin. So far as actual existence is concerned, there is no difference between marriage and fornication. What distinguishes one from the other is the command of Allãh — marriage conforms with the divine law, and fornication goes against that law. Someone is killed without any reason; another is killed by a lawful authority in reprisal of a murder. A teacher punishes an orphan in order to guide him aright; an oppressor hits at the same orphan unjustly. In all these examples, the actual movements of the actions are identical. But one group is called sin because it does not conform with the divine law or goes against the common weal of the society.

Allãh says: *Allãh is the Creator of everything*. . . (39:62). Every action is a "thing" inasmuch as it exists. And the Imam has said: "Whatsoever may be called a thing is created, except Allãh . . ." Also, Allãh says: *Who made good everything that He has created* . . . (32:7). It may be inferred that everything is good because it is created. Creation and goodness are inseparable factors. But at the same time, we see

that Allãh has named some actions as evil. For example, He says: *Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall not be recompensed but only with the like of it . . .* (6:160). These are obviously the actions done by man; not the factor of recompense which cannot apply to divine actions. Such a deed is called sin. It is evil because it lacks some thing; because it is a nullification of a spiritual virtue or social good. In other words, a sin is sin because it is a negation , a non-being; otherwise it would have been good.

Now, let us look at the following verses of the Qur'ãn:

No misfortune befalls on the earth nor in your own souls, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence . . . (57:22); *No affliction comes about but by Allãh's permission; and whoever believes in Allãh, He guides aright his heart . . .* (64:11); *And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought, and* (yet) *He pardons most* (of your faults) (42:30); *Whatever benefit comes to you, it is from Allãh, and whatever misfortune befalls you, it is from yourself* (4 :79) ; *. . . and if a benefit comes to them, they say*: *"This is from Allãh*:*" and if a misfortune befalls them they say*: *"This is from you." Say*: *"All is from Allãh;" but what is the matter with these people that well-nigh they do not understand what is told* (them)? (4:78). On pondering upon these verses, it becomes clear that these misfortunes are relative evils. A man is bestowed with the bounties of Allãh, like security and peace; health and wealth, and so on; then he loses one or more of these bounties. This misfortune, in relation to that man, is evil because it has nullified some existing things, that is, the bounties which he had previously enjoyed. Thus, every misfortune is created by Allãh, and at that stage it is not an evil. But it is an evil when seen in relation to the man who loses an existing bounty because of it.

Likewise, every sin is a negative factor, and as such, it is

not to be attributed to Allãh at all; though it may be attributed to Him from another angle, inasmuch as it happens by permission of Allãh.

al-Bazanṭi said: I told ar-Riḍã (a.s.) that some of our fellows believe in compulsion and some of them advocate the (belief of) capability. Thereupon he told me: "Write down (as I say): Allãh, Blessed and High is He, has said: `O son of Adam! By My will you have become such that you wish for yourself what you wish; and by My power you discharged the duties imposed by Me (on you); and by My bounty, you got power to disobey Me; I made you hearing, seeing (and) powerful. Whatever benefit comes to you, it is from Allãh; and whatever misfortune befalls you, it is from yourself. And it is as it is because I have more right on your good deeds than you have yourself; and you are more liable to your sins than Me. And it is because I cannot be questioned concerning what I do and they shall be questioned. Thus, I have arranged for you everything that you want . . .' " (*Qurbu 'l-asnãd*)
This, or nearly the same, tradition is narrated through other chains, of the Sunnis as well as of the Shi'ahs. In short, the deeds that cannot be attributed to Allãh, are the sins *per se.* It further explains the sentence of the preceding tradition: "If he were their creator, He would not have disowned their liability . . . What Allãh has disowned any responsibility of, is their idol-worship and their evils . . ." Abu Ja'far and Abu `Abdillãh (a.s.) said: "Certainly, Allãh is too Merciful to His creatures to compel them to sin and then to punish them for it. And Allãh is too powerful for anyone to think that He would will a thing and it would not happen!" (The narrator) said: "Then they (a.s.) were asked: 'Is there a third position between the (positions of) compulsion and (independent) capability?' They said: 'Yes, broader than (the space) between the heaven and the earth.' " (*at-Tawḥīd*)

Muhammad ibn `Ajlãn said: "I asked Abu `Abdillãh (a.s.) whether Allãh has delegated (the authority of) the affair

to the servants. He said: ‘Allãh is too honourable to delegate (the authority) to them.’ I said: ‘Then has He compelled the servants in their deeds?’ He said: ‘Allãh is too just to compel a servant on a deed and then to punish him for it.’ ” (*ibid.*)

In the same book Mihzam is reported as saying: “Abũ `Abdillãh (a.s.) said: ‘Tell me what is that concerning which our followers (whom you have left behind) have differed among themselves.’ I said: ‘About the compulsion and the delegation?’ He said: ‘Then ask me about it.’ I asked: ‘Has Allãh compelled the servants to (commit) sins?’ He replied: ‘Allãh is too over-powering to do it to them.’ I asked: ‘Then has He delegated (the authority) to them?’ He replied: ‘Allãh has too much power over them to do so.’ I asked : ‘Then what is it (i.e., the correct position)? May Allãh make your affairs right for you!’ ” (The narrator says:) “The Imam turned his hand twice or thrice, then said: ‘If I were to answer you concerning it, you would not believe.’ ”

The author says: “Allãh is too overpowering to do it to them”: Compulsion means that a *force majeure* subdues the subject in such a way that his power of action is nullified. “Too overpowering” (or, more overpowering than that) is the predominant will of Allãh — He has willed that the action would emanate from the doer by his free will and choice, and this is what is actually happening in the world. The divine will has given the man freedom of will; neither the divine will negates the human will, nor the human will collides with the divine will.

It is reported in *at-Tawḥīd* that as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “The Apostle of Allãh said: ‘Whoever thinks that Allãh enjoins the evil and indecency, he tells a lie against Allãh; and whoever believes that the good and bad (do happen) without the will of Allãh, he removes Allãh from His authority.’ ”

It is reported that al-Ḥajjaj ibn Yũsuf wrote to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, `Amr ibn `Ubayd, Wãṣil ibn ‘Aṭa’ and ‘Ãmir ash-

Sha‘bī, asking them to describe what they had got (and what has reached them) in respect of (divine) decree and measure. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri wrote to him: “The best thing that has reached me is that which I heard the Leader of the faithful, `Ali ibn Abi Ṭãlib (a.s.) saying: ‘Do you think that He Who has forbidden you has (also) acted cunningly against you? Rather, your lower and higher (parts) have cunningly deceived you, and Allãh is free from its liability.’ “And `Amr ibn `Ubayd wrote to him: “The best thing I have heard about the decree and measure is the saying of the Leader of the faithful, `Ali ibn Abi Ṭãlib (a.s.): ‘If perfidy were in reality decreed, the perfidious man, if punished, would have been op-pressed.’ ” And Wasil ibn `Ata' wrote to him: “The best I have heard about the decree and measure is the saying of the Leader of the faithful, `Ali ibn Abi Ṭãlib (a.s.): `Do you think that He would guide you to the path and (then) obstruct you (from moving on)?’ ” And ash-Sha'bi wrote to him: “The best thing I have heard concerning the decree and measure is the word of the Leader of the faithful, `Ali ibn Abi Ṭãlib (a.s.): ‘Whatever you have to seek Allãh's pardon for it, it is from you; and what-ever you thank Allãh for it, it is from Him.’ ” When their letters reached al-Ḥajjãj and he studied them, he said: “Certainly they have taken it from a clear spring.” (*aṭ-Ṭarã'if*)

It is narrated in the same book that someone asked Ja‘far ibn Muhammad as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) about the decree and measure, and he replied: “Whatever you may blame the servant (of Allãh) for it, it is from him; and whatever you cannot blame the servant (of Allãh) for it, it is the work of Allãh. Allãh will say to the servant: ‘Why did you disobey? Why did you transgress? Why did you drink liquor? Why did you fornicate?’ This is, therefore, the work of the servant. But He will not say to him: ‘Why were you sick? Why were you of short stature? Why did you become white? Why were you black?’(He will not ask it) because it is the work of Allãh.”

Ali (as.) was asked about monotheism and justice (of Allãh), and he said: "Monotheism is that you should not imagine Him; and justice is that you should not accuse Him." (*Nahju 'l-balãghah*)

The author says: There are numerous traditions on this subject; but those quoted above throw light on all the aspects of the topic.

The above-mentioned traditions show various special methods of argument regarding the subject matter.

a) Some of them argue on the basis of legislation itself — order and prohibition; punishment and reward etc. — that man has freedom of will, without any compulsion or delegation of power. See, for example, the speech of the Leader of the faithful, 'Ali (a.s.), replying to the old man. It is similar to the argument we have inferred from the words of Allãh.

b) Others bring in evidence the verses of the Qur'ãn which cannot be reconciled with the theory of compulsion or delegation of power. For example: *And Allãh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth* (3:189); *and your Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants* (41:46). Also, there is the verse, *Say*: *"Surely Allãh does not enjoin indecency"* (7:28).

Poser : A deed may be described as unjust or indecent if it is seen in relation to us. But when it is attributed to Allãh it is not called unjust or indecent. Therefore, even if all "our" deeds were actually done by Allãh, it would be perfectly right to say that He is not unjust and does not enjoin indecency.

Reply: The sentence seen in the context leaves no room for such misconceptions. The complete verse is as follows: *And when they commit an indecency they say*: *"We found our fathers doing this and Allãh has enjoined it on us." Say*: *"Surely Allãh does not enjoin indecency. Do you say*

against Allãh what you do not know?" Look at the sentence, "and Allãh has enjoined it on us." The pronoun "it" clearly refers to the indecency committed by them; and it is the same deed which is referred to in the sentence, "Surely Allãh does not enjoin indecency." Allãh does not enjoin what is termed as indecency in context of human activities; it does not matter whether in other framework it is called indecency or not.

c) A third type of reasoning is based on the divine attributes. Allãh has given Himself many good names, and has described Himself with many sublime attributes, which cannot be squared with compulsion or delegation of power. Allãh is the Subduer, the Omnipotent, the Benevolent and the Merciful. These attributes can only be believed in if one believes that everything depends on Allãh in its existence, and that its defects and shortcomings can-not be attributed to Him at all. (Refer to the traditions quoted from *at-Tawḥīd.*)

d) Yet others refer to seeking the pardon of Allãh as well as to the blame which society directs at the wrong-doer. If sin were not from the man himself, there would have been no meaning in asking for divine pardon. If all our actions were done by Allãh why should be we blamed for only some of them and not for the others?

e) Lastly, there are the traditions which explain the words, like causing to err, sealing the hearts and misleading, when they are attributed to Allãh:

ar-Riḍã (a.s.) said explaining the words of Allãh, *and He* (Allãh) *left them in utter darkness — they do not see*: *"*Allãh is not described as leaving something as His creatures do. But when He knew that they would not return from disbelief and error, He held back His help and grace from them and let them alone with their choice." (*`Uyũnu 'l-akhbãr*)

The same book narrates from the same Imam in explanation of the words of Allãh, *Allãh has set a seal upon their hearts*: *"*It is setting a seal on the hearts of the disbelievers as a punishment of their disbelief, as Allãh has

said: . . . *nay! Allãh has set a seal upon them owing to their disbelief, so they shall not believe except a few* (4:155)."

as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said concerning the words of Allãh, *Surely Allãh is not ashamed to set forth any parable. . .*: "This divine word answers those who think that Allãh makes (His) servants go astray and then punishes them for that straying . . ." (*Majma`u 'l-bayãn*)

The author says: Its meaning may be understood from previous explanations.

A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION

Every species is related to a particular type of action and reaction. In fact it is these special characteristics which identify the species as such. We looked at various kinds of actions and reactions emanating from various groups. Our reason told us that there should be an efficient cause, an agent, to bring each kind of these actions and reactions into being. Therefore, we put every group in a separate category, identifying it as a species. When we compared human characteristics, for example, with those of an animal, and delineated them clearly, we decided that they were two different species, with different characteristics.

When the actions are seen in relation to their subjects, that is, the species, they are primarily divided into two categories:

First: The actions emanating from the nature — where the knowledge of their emanation has no effect at all on their existence. For example, the growth and nutrition of the vegetables; the movement of the bodies; our own health or illness. These things are known to us, present in our own bodies; but our knowing or not knowing them has no effect whatsoever on their coming into being; they totally depend upon their doer — that is, nature.

Second: The actions issuing forth from the doer with his

knowledge — where the said knowledge has a bearing on their being, like the intentional actions of the man and even of some animals. The doer does such an action after knowing and identifying it; and it is the knowledge and perception that gives him that insight. The knowledge makes him realize what would constitute his perfection, and helps him in deciding whether a particular action would lead to that desired perfection. The knowledge distinguishes the means of perfection from other things; and this distinction helps the doer in choosing a particular course of action. And the action comes into being.

The activities based upon ingrained aptitude (like issuing forth of the required voices, when a man speaks), as well as those emanating from natural disposition, or from the dictates of nature (like breathing) and, likewise, those springing from overwhelming grief or fear etc., do not require contemplation or meditation by the doer. Why? Because there is not more than one form of knowledge here, and the doer does not have to delay his activity awaiting a final decision. Therefore, he does it immediately. But in other cases, where the doer has before his eyes two or more possible forms of knowledge to choose from, he has to spend at least a few moments in contemplation and deliberation. For example, Zayd is hungry, and he gets a bread. Its one aspect is that it may satiate his hunger; but there may be other aspects too — it may be another man's property, it may be poisoned, it may have become dirty and so on. Zayd has to reflect whether the bread is legally, morally and hygienically fit for consumption. When he reaches a conclusion, the actions follows without any delay.

The first type of activities is called involuntary, like natural reactions; the second type is called voluntary, or intentional, like walking or talking.

The intentional actions, emanating from man's knowledge and will, are again divided into two categories:

First: When the man decides to do — or, not to do — a

certain work, he may do so entirely on his own, without being influenced by any other fellow. In the example given above, Zayd may decide, on his own, not to eat the bread because it was someone else's property; or he may eat it in spite of that snag. This is called a deed done by man's free will.

Second: When the man opts for a certain course of action under the influence of someone else. A tyrant may force a help-less person to act according to that tyrant's instruction under duress. The poor fellow in this condition commits sins and crimes against his own will. This is called a deed done under compulsion.

Right? But let us look at this second category more closely. We have said that this kind of deed results from the compeller's compulsion; he does not allow any freedom to the doer, who has to take the only way left open by the oppressor. But even then, it is the doer himself who decides to proceed on that way. It is true that the major factor leading to this decision was the tyrant's compulsion; but it is equally true that the decision was taken by the doer himself, even though it was taken to save himself from the tyrant's oppression. In short, even the deeds done under compulsion are done by the will of the doer. It follows that the division of intentional actions into these two categories is not real, not based on actual facts. The intentional action is the one which emanates from a knowledge and a will that tips the balance in its favour. This reality is found in the deed done under compulsion as well as in the one done by free will. It makes no difference that it was some other man's force or fear that tipped the balance in one case and the doer's own thinking that did so in the other. A man sitting near a wall looks up to find that it was about to fall; overcome by fear he sprints away from that place. And we say that he did so by his own free will. Suppose, a tyrant threatens to bull-doze the wall over him if he did not move away. Overcome by fear, he sprints away from there. And we say that it was done under

compulsion. But the fundamentals in both cases are the same. The man is overcome by fear and decides to move away. So, why should we put them in two different categories.

Objection: There is enough difference between the two actions to warrant their assignment to two different categories. The deed done by free will is based on its underlying wisdom (in the eyes of the doer); the doer deserves praise or blame, and gets reward or punishment, for it. All these factors are simply absent in the case of a deed done under compulsion.
Reply: It is true. But these factors are based on subjective approach of the society. They do not have any existence outside the imagination. By talking on these subjective approaches we have crossed the limits of philosophy. Philosophy deals with the things that exist in reality, as well as with those things' natural characteristics. What all this leads to is the conclusion that the discussion whether man is free in his actions is beyond the scope of philosophy.

We may yet bring it back on the track of philosophy from another direction:

A transient (possible) thing has equal relation with existence and non-existence. It, therefore, needs a sufficient cause to tip the balance in favour of existence, so that it may come into being.

The transient thing, when related to its sufficient cause, becomes an essential being — it becomes impossible for it not to exist. That is why it is said that a transient does not come into being unless it becomes an essential being.

A transient, by its definition, must have a sufficient cause for its existence. A transient existing without its sufficient cause is a contradiction in terms. And that cause gives it the essentiality, so long as it exists.

Now look at the universe at a glance. You will find a chain made up of innumerable links, all of which would be

essential beings. In other words, not a single existing thing could be called a transient, so long as it exists.

But this "essential-ness" comes to it only when it is looked at in relation to its sufficient cause.

The sufficient cause may be a single thing or a compound of various causes — the material, the formal, the efficient and the final causes, plus the necessary conditions of time and space as well as other preliminaries. An effect when related to its sufficient cause must invariably exist — because the said cause would make it essential. But when seen with only a part of that cause, or if related to any outside factor, it would not be essential; it would remain a transient as before.

If a transient, on being related to only a part of its sufficient cause (e.g., to its efficient cause only) become essential and come into being, its sufficient cause would be superfluous; and it would be a contradiction in term.

It shows that in this natural world two systems are found simultaneously: one of essentiality and the other of transiency. The system of essentiality covers the sufficient causes and their effects — there is no transiency in any part of this world, neither in any person nor in any action. The stystem of transiency permeates the matter and its potentialities when related to only a part of the sufficient cause. Take any human action; if it is related to its sufficient cause — man (the efficient cause), knowledge and will (the final), matter (the material) and its shape (the formal) plus all conditions of time and space including removal of every hindrance — it would become essential. But if it is seen in relation to only its efficient cause, that is, man, it would remain transient.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the transient things need a cause for their existence because of their transiency. And this need would not end until the chain of cause and effect finally reaches a cause Who is the Essential Being. This observation leads to the following two conclusions:

First: The need of an effect for its cause does not end on

its being related to its transient cause. The need continues until it reaches the Final Cause, the Essential Being.

Second: This need emanates from its transient nature. It needs a cause to bring it into existence with all its characteristics and traits, including its relationship with its various causes, fulfilling all the conditions of its existence.

Now we may ponder upon the question of compulsion and delegation of power, keeping in view the above-mentioned premises:

First: No delegation of power: Man, like all other things and their actions, depends on the will of Allãh, for his existence. In the same way, man's action depends on the will of Allãh in its existence. Therefore, the Mu‘tazilites' view — that human actions have no relation at all to the divine will — is completely baseless. There was no reason at all for them to deny the decree and measure of Allãh in respect of the man's actions.

Second: No compulsion: This relation to the will of Allãh, inasmuch as it is concerned with existence, keeps all the characteristics of the created thing in view. Every effect emanates from its cause — with all its characteristics which have any bearing on its existence. A man's creation is attributed to Allãh, keeping in view all its intermediary causes and condition — the father, the mother, the time, the place, the features, the quantity, the quality and a lot of other concomitants. Likewise, the action of man is attributed to Allãh, keeping in view all its characteristics and conditions. When a man's action is attributed to Allãh and His will, it does not cease to be the man's action; it is still caused by the said man's will. The will of Allãh decrees that the action be done by the man emanating from the man's own free will and choice. Therefore, it would be a contradiction in term to say that the action was no longer done by man's free will because it was related to the divine will. Allãh Himself has decreed it to be a work of the man by his free will; how can it be said that the divine will lost its

effectiveness and the action happened without the man's free will? It is now clear that the view of al-Mujabbirah — that the human action's relation to the divine will nullifies its relation to the human will — is absolutely devoid of truth.

The above discourse shows that the said action has a relation to the human will and a relation to the divine will; neither relation nullifies the other, because each is connected with the other vertically, not horizontally.

Third: The human action, when related to its sufficient cause, becomes essential. But seen in relation to only a part of the sufficient cause, it remains transient. For example, when the action is related to only its sufficient cause, that is, man, it does not become essential, but remains transient as before.

Therefore, what a group of modern materialist philosophers have said — that the whole system of nature is permeated by compulsion, and there is no free will at all in the universe — is totally wrong. As we have said, all effects in relation to their sufficient causes are essential, but, when related to only a part of the said causes, are transient. And it is the foundation on which man's life is based. A man teaches and trains his child and then hopes that his efforts would bear fruit. If there was no freedom in the world, if everything was essential and had to happen anyhow, then all this teaching and training would be of no earthly use; there would remain no place for hope in human life.

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتاً فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ
يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ـ ٢٨ . هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي
الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّيهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَهُوَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ـ ٢٩ .

***How do you deny Allãh and you were dead and He gave you life? Again He will cause you to die and again bring you to life; then you shall be brought back to Him* (28). *He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth, and He directed Himself to the heaven, so He made them complete seven heavens; and He know all things* (29).**

GENERAL COMMENT

The talk reverts again to the initial topic. The beginning of the chapter dealt with three categories of mankind; then all were addressed together (verses 21-27) with the words, "O men", Now these verses describe the same subject with a grater detail. The twelve verses, starting from here, depict the reality of man; show the potentialities of perfection which Allãh has endowed him with; delineate the vast scope of his inner being; describe the various stages — death and life, and again death and life; then the return to Allãh — through which he passes in his journey, explaining that the final destination is Allãh. In this context, the verses describe some basic bounties of Allãh upon him — creative as well as legislative. He created for him all that is. in the earth and made the heaven subservient to him. He made him His deputy on the earth, ordered the angels to prostrate before him, put the first man into the Garden, opened for him the door of repentance and enhanced his prestige by guiding him to His worship. In this background,

the opening words, “How do you deny Allãh”, serve to emphasize the grace and bounty of Allãh on man.

COMMENTARY

QUR’ÃN: *How do you deny Allãh . . . you shall be brought back to Him*: The verse is somewhat (though not exactly) similar to the verse 40:11: *They shall say*: *“Our Lord! twice didst Thou give us death, and twice hast Thou give us life, so we do confess our faults; is there then a way to get out?* This (later) is one of the verses that prove an *al-barzakh* (آلـبَـرزَخُ = intervening period or life) between this world and the next. It says that Allãh gives death twice. First is the death that transfers us from this world. But when and where shall we be given the second death? Giving of death presupposes a preceding life. It means that man shall be given a life in the period intervening between this first death and the Day of Resurrection. This argument is solid, and it has been offered in some traditions too.

Question: Both verses have exactly the same connotation. Both mention two deaths and two lives. According to the verse 2:28, the stage before the life of this world has been called the first death. Then comes the first life in this world, followed by the second death transferring the man to the next world, and lastly will come the second life on the Day of Resurrection. The second verse (40:11) too should be interpreted in the same way, because both have the same import. It means that after the death of this world, there is no life before the Day of Resurrection.

Reply: It is wrong to say that the two verses have the same connotation. The verse 2:28 mentions one death, one causing to die and two givings of life; while the verse 40:11 is talking about two givings of death and two givings of life.

There is a world of difference between "death" and "causing to die". "Causing to die" shows a preceding life; while "death" can be used just for absence of life — even when there was no life before it.

The verse 40:11 refers to the death after this life, then the life of the intervening period, then the death after that, and finally to the life on the Day of Resurrection. The verse 2:28 on the other hand, refers first to the lifeless state ("death", and not "causing to die") before coming to this world, then goes on mentioning this life, then death and then the life of the intervening period. There will be some delay before man is returned to his Lord. The conjunctive used "*thumma"* (ثُمَّ = then) denotes some delay. Its use here supports this explanation because after the life of the intervening period there shall come again a death and only then the man shall be returned to Allãh.

QUR'ÃN : *and you were dead and He gave you life*: It shows the reality of man and his existence. He is a being, ever-changing, ever proceeding on his path of perfection, step by step, stage by stage. Before coming into this world, he was dead, then he was made alive by Allãh and came here; again he will be caused to die and then be made alive again. Allãh says: . . . *and He began the creation of man from dust. Then He made his progeny of an extract, of water held in light estimation. Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit* . . . (32:7-9); . . . *then We did grow it into another creation; so blessed be Allãh, the best of the creators* (23:14); *And they say*: *"What! when we have become lost in the earth, shall we then indeed be in a new generation?" Nay! they are disbelievers in the meeting of their Lord. Say*: *"The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die, then to your Lord you shall be brought back"* (32:10-11) ; *From it We created you and into it We shall send you back from it will We raise you a second*

time (20:55). The verses will be explained when we shall come to them; they have been quoted here only to show that man is a part of the earth, he was created from it, gradually developed until he grew into "another creation"; this "another creation" proceeds on the path of his perfection; then the angel of death completely removes this "man" from the body; and he returns to Allãh. This is the path which the man has to take to.

The divine decree has planned the universe in such a way that every thing is related to every thing else; there is a constant action and reaction between it and the rest of the creation. Man too influences, and is in turn influenced by, all that exists in the earth and in the heavens — the elements and their characteristics, the animal world, the vegetable world, the minerals, the water, the air and, in short, every creation of nature. The fact is that the scope of man's activities is much greater, and his circle far bigger than anything else's. He has been given thinking and reasoning powers, and, as a result of this unique gift of Allãh, he influences the other creatures, manages them, arranges and re-arranges them, manipulates them, destroys them, amends them and perfects them, on a scale unheard of outside his circle. Every creature is under his domain. Sometimes he imitates nature by creating synthetic items for his needs; at other times he sets some forces of nature against the others. In short, he obtains, by all possible means, whatever he wants from whatever he wants. Passage of time has further strengthened his hands; now he has deeper insight in the working of nature, and manipulates the system even more effectively. That is so that Allãh may establish the reality by His words, and so that the truth of His speech may be seen even more clearly: *And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself* (45:13). The verse following the verse under discussion, that is, 2:29, states the same fact: *He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth, and He directed Himself to the heavens, so He made them complete seven heavens.* The

context — description of the bounties of Allãh bestowed on man — shows that it was for the benefit of man that Allãh directed Himself to the heavens and made them complete seven. (Ponder on the point!)

This is the path taken by the man in his journey of existence; and this is the imprint of his activities on the universe; it shows where he began from and what is his final destination.

Man's life in this world originates from nature, as the Qur'ãn confirms. But the same book declares also that this very life emanates from Allãh: . . . *and indeed I created you before, when you were nothing* (19:9); *Surely He it is Who originates and returns* (85:13). Man is a creature that is brought up in the caressing fold of creation, gets his nourishment from the breast of production, and is connected on this level with life-less nature. But, on the level of origination, he is related to the command of Allãh, to His authority: *His command, when He intends anything, is only that He says to it, "Be", and it is* (36:82); *Our word for a thing when We intend it, is only that We say to it, "Be", and it is* (16:40).

This much about genesis. As for the return journey, the path divides in two: the path of happiness, and that of unhappiness.

The path of happiness is the shortest route, leading the man to the sublime spiritual heights. It keeps raising his status and enhancing his rank until it takes him to the divine nearness. The path of unhappiness, on the other hand, is a long route that keeps demeaning and debasing him rendering him lowest of the low, until he reaches the divine presence. *And Allãh encompasses them on every side* (85:20) . This subject has been fully explained under the verse, *Guide us to the straight path* (1:6).

This was a short description of man's path. Details about his life in this world, and before and after it, will be given in their proper place. The verse under discussion is not concerned with those details; it makes only a passing reference to it as it has some bearing on guidance and misguidance, happiness and

unhappiness.

He made them complete seven heavens: We shall write about the heavens in Chapter 32 (*as-Sajdah*), God willing.

* * * * *

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلاَئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا
أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ
وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لاَ تَعْلَمُونَ ـ ٣٠. وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ
الأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلاَئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلاَءِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ـ ٣١ . قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لاَ عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلاَّ مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ـ ٣٢. قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا
أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ـ ٣٣.

And when your Lord said to the angels, "Verily I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent"; they said*: *"wilt thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood while we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness?" He said*: *"Surely I know what you do not know" **(30).** ***And He taught Adam the names, all of them, then presented them to the angels and He said*: *"Tell Me the names of those if you are right"*** **(31).** ***They said*: *"Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us; surely Thou, Thou*** **(alone),** ***art the knowing, the Wise"*** **(32).** ***He said*: *"O***

Adam! inform them of their names. And when he had informed them of their names, He said: "Did I not say to you that I surely know the unseen heavens and the earth and (that) ***I know what you manifest and what you were hiding?"*** (33).

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

The verses tell us why the man has been sent to this world, what is the significance of his appointment as the vicegerent of Allãh in this earth, what are the characteristics and special features of this vicegerency. Unlike other Qur'ãnic stories, it has been told in one place only, that is, in these verses.

QUR'ÃN: *And when your Lord said*: *We* shall explain in vol. IV, what the "speech" or "saying" means when it is attributed to Allãh, to angels and to the Satan.

QUR'ÃN: *they said*: *"Wilt thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it . . . and extol Thy holiness?"*: The angels heard the announcement, "I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent", and at once arrived at the conclusion that the would be vicegerent would make mischief in the earth and shed blood. Apparently they understood the ultimate behaviour of the said vicegerent from the words, "in the earth". A vicegerent appointed in the earth would certainly be created from material components; he would necessarily be bestowed with two basic traits of desire and anger; the earth is a place of unceasing struggle and constant confrontation; its resources are limited, its opportunities finite; but the proposed vicegerent's desire would be unlimited, infinite. The condition of the earth and earthly things was hardly reassuring. Its creatures were subjected to ever-continuing deterioration and disintegration;

its good was always turning into bad; it was a place where an individual could not live without a group having similar characteristics and traits. Keeping all this in view, the angels at once understood that what Allãh intended to create was not only an individual, but a species. The members of that species would have to live together, cooperating with one another; that is to say, they would have to establish a society, a social order. And with a venture like this, they were bound to cause mischief and to shed blood.

On the other hand, they knew that vicegerency — setting one thing in place of another — was unthinkable unless the vicegerent were a true copy of his predecessor in all the characteristics, traits and intrinsic abilities. The proposed earthly creature was to be made vicegerent of Allãh in the earth. Allãh has got for Himself the best names, the sublime attributes; His mercy and power are beyond the comprehension of His creatures; He, in His person, is untouched by any defect; and, in his actions, is free from all kinds of evil and disorder. How could an earthly vicegerent, with all his defects and deficiencies, represent the majesty and splendour of Allãh in the earth? Well, could a lowly creature of earth be a mirror of divine beauty and sublimity?

This was their question — and it was no more than a question. It was not a protest, not an objection; they actually wanted to know the truth. They later asserted their belief that Allãh was the Knowing, the Wise. They believed that what Allãh intended to do was based on knowledge and wisdom; and their question was put in order to learn the underlying wisdom of the decision of Allãh. What their question — or, pleading — amounted to was as follows:

Allãh intends to appoint a vicegerent in the earth, in order that the said vicegerent should represent Allãh by celebrating His praise and glorifying His holiness through his worthy presence. But his earthly nature would not let him do so; it would irresistibly pull him towards mischief and wickedness. So far as the main purpose of this vicegerency

— celebrating Allãh's praise and glorifying His holiness — is concerned, we are already doing it. Therefore, we are Allãh's *de facto* vicegerents; and if Allãh wishes, He may bestow upon us this designation. What is the need, then, of a new creation to act as vicegerent of Allãh in the earth?

For the reply, Allãh used a sentence, “Surely I know what you do not know”, and an action, “And He taught Adam the names, all of them”.

The context shows that :

First: The vicegerent was to get the vicegerency of Allãh; he was not to become a successor of any earthly creature that had preceded him. If Allãh had wanted the man to take the place of that previous creature, the reply, “And He taught Adam the names, all of them”, would be quite irrelevant.

Assuming that man was given vicegerency of Allãh, this prestige would not be restricted to the person of Adam only, his descendants too would be vicegerents of Allãh in the earth. Adam was taught the names; in other words, this knowledge was ingrained in human being in such a manner that, since that first day, it has been constantly bearing newer, fresher and better fruits; whenever man gets a chance, he discovers new avenues of knowledge; and thus he always finds himself imbued with previously unknown potentialities that more often than not turn into real achievements. It is a never ending process; it is a wonder that will not cease, and ever-fresh insight that will never fail to astonish.

That this assumption is correct, and the whole mankind is vicegerent of Allãh, is evident by the following verses: *And remember* (O people of ‘Ãd!) *when He made you successors of Nũḥ's people . . .* (7:69); *Then We made you successors in the land after them . . .* (10:14); *. . . and He makes you successors in the earth* (27:62). The word translated here as “successor” is the same that has been translated as “vicegerent” in the verse under discussion.

Second: Allãh did not say that the vicegerent-designate would not cause mischief and bloodshed; nor did He reject the plea of the angels that they celebrated His praise and extolled His glory. By this silence, He confirmed that the angels were right on both counts. But then He made manifest one thing which the angels were not aware of. He showed them that there was a matter which they could not shoulder the responsibility of, while this proposed vicegerent could do so. Man was entrusted with a divine secret which the angels, in their nature, were unable to know or understand. And that divine gift would more than compensate the ensuing mischief and bloodshed.

Allãh told them, first, that surely He knew what they did not know. Then He referred to the same reply by telling them: "Did I not say that I surely know the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth?" Looking at the intervening sentences it may easily be understood that the "unseen (secrets)" refer to "the names". It does not refer to Adam's knowledge of those names. The angels were unaware of even the existence of these "names"; it was not that they knew about the names but were not sure whether Adam knew them or not. Had the angels been doubtful only about Adam's knowledge of the names, it would have been enough to tell Adam to inform the angels of the names in order that they would have known that Adam knew. Instead, Allãh first asked them to tell Him "the names of those". The angels had claimed the vicegerency of Allãh for themselves, and had hinted that Adam was not fit for it; but the essential qualification for the vicegerency was the knowledge of the names; therefore, Allãh asked both candidates about the names; the angels did not know them, and Adam knew; it proved that he had the qualification while they lacked it. The question (about this knowledge) addressed to the angels ends with the clause, "if you are right"; it means that they had claimed a position, essential qualification of which was this

knowledge.

QUR'ÃN: *And He taught Adam the names, all of them, then presented them to the angels*: The Arabic pronoun, "them", used in "then presented them", is made for rational beings, those who have life, sense and understanding. Obviously, the names (or, the named ones) were some living and sensible being who were hidden behind the curtain of the "unseen". It follows that the knowledge given to Adam of their names was something totally different from what we understand from the knowledge of names. Merely knowing the names (in the sense known to us) has no distinction; otherwise, the angels too would have become equal to Adam in this respect as soon as they heard those names from Adam. Also, there would have been no distinction for Adam in such a knowledge. The angels could rightly complain to Allãh that He taught those names to Adam, but kept them (i.e. the angels) in dark; had He taught them too, they would have been equal to, if not better than, Adam! Understandably, such favouritism could not have silenced the angels. Surely, it was something deeper then merely knowing all the names.

It would not have been a convincing argument for Allãh to teach Adam a dictionary and then put it as an evidence against the angels — the honoured servants who do not precede Him in speech and who act according to His commandment only — telling them to inform Him of the words which they had not been taught, and which the mankind was to invent in future. Moreover, the only purpose of language is to convey the feelings and ideas to the hearer; but the angels do not need any language for this purpose; they convey and receive the ideas directly without the medium of words; their stage is far higher than that of human beings in this respect.

However, it is clear that the knowledge of the names which the angels got after hearing them from Adam was not

the same as Adam had got by teaching of Allãh — the inferior knowledge of the names they could grasp, but not the superior one which qualified Adam for vicegerency of Allãh.

Adam deserved the vicegerency because he was given the knowledge of the names, and not because he informed the angels of those names. That is why they declared, "Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us". They accepted that they did not possess that knowledge.

The above discourse leads us to believe that Adam was taught the names of the named ones in such a way that he clearly knew their reality and recognized their substantial existence; it was not merely knowing the semantic value of a noun. The named ones were substantial realities, the actual beings that were, at the same time, hidden behind the curtain of the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth. This especial knowledge could be learnt only by an earthly human being, but was quite incomprehensible by a heavenly angel. And this knowledge had an intrinsic bearing upon vicegerency.

"al-Asmã' " (اَلاَسْماءُ = the names) , in the sentences, "And He taught Adam the names", is a plural with the definite article "*al*" (اَلْـ = the) prefixed to it. Grammatically, it denotes generality, comprehensiveness; and it is followed by the emphatic, "all of them". Clearly, Adam was taught all the names of every named thing, without any restriction or limitation. As described earlier, the pronoun, "them", in the clause, "then presented them to the angels", shows that every name, that is, the named one, was a living being having knowledge and intellect; and at the same time, he was in the curtain of the unseen — the unseen of the heavens and the earth.

"The unseen of the heavens and the earth": It is a genitive case. Somewhere else this phrase may mean the unseen parts of the heavens and the earth. But in this verse, where Allãh

intends to demonstrate His perfect and comprehensive power, and to show the deficiency and incapability of the angels, it must mean a secret which is unseen to all the worlds, to all the heavens and the earth; an unseen beyond the sphere of the universe.

If you look at all the particulars of this verse — that "the names" denotes generality, that the named ones were alive and had knowledge, and that they were unseen to the heavens and the earth — you will agree that it perfectly fits on the theme of the verse 15:21, *And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it and We do not send it down but in a known measure.* Whatever is called a thing — whatever is "named" a thing — Allãh has its vast treasures, ever-lasting, never-ending, unmeasured by any measure, unlimited by any limit. Measure and limit come to it when it is created and sent down. The vastness of these treasures is not of the same kind as the multiplicity of number, because a number, no matter how large, is by definition measured, limited and quantified. The said treasure are vast in their ranks and grades. (We shall further explain it in Chapter 15.)

The named ones who were presented before the angels were sublime beings, who were well-protected by Allãh, hidden in curtains of the unseen. He sent them down to the universe with their blessings and benefactions, and created all that is in the heavens and in the earth from their light and splendour. Although they had numerous identities, they were not different in their number or in their persons; whatever difference there was, it was in their ranks and grades.

QUR'ÃN : *and I know what you manifest and what you were hiding*: The sentence stands face to face with the mention of the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth. Probably it refers to those things which are the parts of the heavens and the earth; and in this way both sentences together cover all unseen things — those which are beyond the sphere of the heavens and the earth together with those which are within that sphere.

Instead of saying “and what you hide”, Allãh said, “and what you were hiding”. This changed style shows that there was something hidden especially in respect of Adam and his appointment as vicegerent. Probably it was the incident described in the next verse: “. . . (the angels) *prostrated except Iblīs. He refused and he showed arrogance, and he was one of the unbelievers*”. It shows that Iblīs was an unbeliever before then, and that his refusal to prostrate had sprung from that disbelief, which he had kept hidden upto that moment. Obviously, the prostration of the angels and the refusal of Iblīs had happened after Allãh had told them, “Surely I know what you do not know”, but before He said to them, “ . . . I know what you manifest and what you were hiding” (i.e. the unbelief kept secret by Iblīs) . It also explains the reason why the former sentence was changed to, “I surely know the unseen (secrets) of the heavens and the earth”.

TRADITIONS

as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “The angels could not know what they said (*Wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood*) , if they had not (earlier) seen someone who had made mischief in it and shed blood.” (*at-Tafsīr,* al-‘Ayyãshi)

The author says: This tradition may be pointing to an earlier creature that inhabited the earth before the mankind, as some other traditions say. It is not against what we have said that they understood it from the very words of Allãh: *Verily, I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent*; rather the tradition and our explanation are complementary. The tradition, without putting it in the framework of our explanation, would show that the angels too, like Iblīs, had committed the folly of unauthorized analogy — a very objectionable practice.

Zurarah said: "I visited Abu Ja'far (a.s.) and he asked (me): 'What do you have of Shi'ah traditions?' I said: 'I do have a large number of it; and I was thinking of kindling a fire to burn them in it.' He said: 'Hide it (somewhere), you will (naturally) forget what you are not familiar with.' " (Zurarah said) : "Then, I thought about the mankind (and asked him about them). He said: 'How did the angels get their knowledge when they said, *Wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood?'* " Zurarah further reports that whenever Abu 'Abdillãh (a.s.) mentioned this tradition, he said: "It is a shattering blow against al-Qadariyyah (i.e. those who say that man is completely independent of Allãh in his actions)." Abu 'Abdillãh (a.s.) further said: "Adam (a.s.) had, in the heaven, a friend from among the angels. When Adam got down from the heaven to the earth, the angel felt lonely; he complained (of it) to Allãh and sought His permission. Allãh allowed him and he came down to him (Adam); he found him (Adam) sitting in a desolate region. When Adam saw him, he put his hand on his head and cried aloud." Abu 'Abdillãh (a.s.) said: "They narrate that (it was such a loud cry that) all the creatures heard it. The angel told him: 'O Adam ! I do not see but that you have disobeyed your Lord and put on yourself a burden beyond your strength. Do you know what Allãh had told us about you, and (what) we had said in His reply?' (Adam) said: 'No.' (The angel) said: 'Allãh told us, "I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent". We said: "Wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood?" Thus, He created you to place you in the earth. Could it be right for you to stay in the heaven?' " Abu 'Abdillãh (a.s.) said: "Allãh in this way consoled Adam for three days." (*ibid.*)

The author says: The tradition shows that the Garden of Adam was in the heaven. Other traditions on this subject will be given later.

In the same book, Abu 'l-‘Abbãs is quoted as saying that he asked Abu ‘Abdillãh (a.s.) about the words of Allãh, *And He taught Adam the names, all of them,* (and enquired) as to what Allãh had taught him. (The Imam) said: “The earths, the mountains, the canyons and the valleys.” Then he looked at the rug which he sat upon and said: “And this rug is among the things which He taught him.”

It is reported in the same book that al-Fuḍayl ibn al-‘Abbãs asked Abu ‘Abdillãh (a.s.) what were the names which Allãh taught Adam. He replied: “The names of the valleys and the vegetables and the trees and the mountains of the earth."

The same book narrates from Dãwũd ibn Sarḥãn al-‘Aṭṭãr that he said : “I was with Abu Abdillãh (a.s.); he called for the table - spread and we took our meals. Then he called for the wash-bowl and hand-towel. I said to him: ‘May I be your ransom! The words of Allãh: *And He taught Adam the names, all of them* — was (this) wash-bowl and hand-towel among them?’ He (a.s.) said: ‘The mountain-passes and the valleys.’ Saying this he pointed by his hand this and that way.” as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “Verily, Allãh taught Adam the names of His proofs, all of them; then He presented them — and they were the spirits — to the angels, and said: ‘Tell Me the names of these if you are right in your claims that you have more right, than Adam, to the vicegerency in the earth because of your glorifying and extolling (Me).’ They said: ‘*Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us; surely Thou, Thou* (alone), *art the Knowing, the Wise.’* Allãh, Blessed and High is He! said: ‘*O Adam! inform them of their names.’* When he informed them of their names, they knew of their (i.e. those spirits) high rank before Allãh, Great is His name! They realized that they (i.e. those spirits) were more deserving to be the vicegerents of Allãh in His earth, and (to be) His proofs over His creatures. Then

Allãh removed them (the spirits) from their sight, and subjugated them with their (i.e. those spirits) obedience and love; and told them, '*Did I not say to you that I surely know the unseen* (secrets) *of the heavens and the earth and* (that) *I know what you manifest and what you were hiding?' "* (*Ma'ãni''l-akhbãr*)

The author says: The meaning of this tradition may be understood from the commentary given earlier; and it may also be realized that there was no contradiction between this tradition and the preceding ones. It was explained earlier that the verse 15:21 (*And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it . . .*) that every thing originally exists in the treasures of the unseen; the things that are with us came into being on descending from there. The name given to a thing in this existence is in fact the name of that which is hidden in the treasures of the unseen. You may say that Allãh taught Adam every thing that was in His treasures of the unseen — unseen that was hidden from the heavens and the earth. The same idea may be conveyed in these words: Allãh taught Adam the names of all things — the things that were unseen secrets hidden from the heavens and the earth. The sum total of both statements is the same.

It is not out of place here to point to the traditions of aṭṭīnah (اَلطِّيْنَةُ = the substance, of which a thing is made). Such a tradition, narrated in *Biḥãru 'l-anwãr, is* as follows:
Jãbir ibn `Abdillãh said: "I said to the Apostle of Allãh (s.a.w.a.): 'What was the first thing which Allãh created?' He said : 'The light of your prophet, O Jãbir! Allãh created it, then created from it every good; then He caused it to stand before Him in the station of "nearness", so long as Allãh wished. Then He divided it into parts; and He created the Throne from one part, and the Chair from another part, and the bearers of the Throne and the occupiers of the Chair from yet another part;

and He placed the fourth part in the station of love, as long as Allãh wished. Then He divided it into parts; and He created the Pen from one part, and the Tablet from another part, and the Garden from yet an-other part; and He placed the fourth part in the station of fear, as long as Allãh wished. Then He divided it into portions, and He created the angels from one portion, and the sun from another portion, and the moon from yet another portion, and He placed the fourth portion in the station of hope, as long as Allãh wished. Then He divided it into portions, and He created the understanding from one portion, and the knowledge and forbearance from another portion, and the (divine) protection and help from yet other portion, and He placed the fourth portion in the station of modesty as long as Allãh wished. Then He looked at it with awe-inspiring eye, and that Light started perspiring, and one hundred and twenty-four thousand drops dropped from it; and Allãh created from each drop the soul of a prophet and apostle. Then the souls of the prophets began breathing, and Allãh created from their breasts the souls of (His) friends and the martyrs and the good ones.' "

The author says: There are numerous traditions of the same type; and on deep pondering they support what we have written earlier; some of them will be discussed later on. You should not reject such traditions outright, thinking that they were forged by the Ṣũfīs. The wonders of the creation are unfathomable; the scientists and the philosophers have spent, and are spending, their lives in discovering some of its secrets; but every solved enigma brings in its wake a lot of fresh previously unthought-of enigmas. Do not forget that this is the unfathomability of this physical world — the smallest in range, the narrowest in scope, the lowest in rank. How can we pass judgement about other worlds beyond this one — the worlds of light, spaciousness and abundance?

* * * * *

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ
وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ـ ٣٤.

And when We said to the angels*: “*Prostrate before Adam*”, *then all prostrated except Iblīs. He refused and he showed arrogance and he was one of the unbelievers (34)**.**

* * * * *

GENERAL COMMENT

It has been explained earlier that the preceding words, “and what you were hiding”, show that there was a hidden thing that had, meanwhile, come into open. The last sentence of this verse too leads to the same conclusion. Instead of saying, “He refused and he showed arrogance, and he disbelieved”, it says, “. . . he was one of the unbelievers”. It was not that he became an unbeliever at that moment; he was an unbeliever long since, but had kept it a secret, and this event brought it into open. Also, it was mentioned that the event of the prostration of the angels must have happened between the divine words, “Surely I know what you do not know”, and the words, “. . . I know what you manifest and what you were hiding”. It may be asked: Why then has Allãh put this verse after those words? Probably it *has* been done just to create a link between the stories of creation of Adam and his being placed in the Paradise. The twelve verses (28 - 39) were revealed to describe how and when man was made

vicegerent of Allãh, how was he sent down to the earth, and what is to happen to him in this life — the happenings that will have a bearing on his lasting happiness or unhappiness. For this theme, the event of prostration has not much importance — except as a connecting link. That is why it has been mentioned here only briefly without going into details. Perhaps, it is because of the same reason that the Qur'ãn has changed the pronouns referring to Allãh from the third person (*your Lord said*) to the first (*And when We said*).

The angels had not hidden anything from Allãh; it was Iblīs who had done so. Then why did Allãh ascribe this deed to all of them (*you were hiding*)*?* Allãh in this talk used the same method which even the human beings have adopted for their own speeches; we ascribe the work of an individual to the whole group, if the doer is not properly identified or if he tries to remain anonymous. Also, there may be another explanation for it. Apparently the first announcement, "I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent", had shown that the said vicegerent would have authority over the angels too. It may be inferred from the command obliging them to prostrate before Adam. Probably on hearing that first announcement some disturbing thought had come into their minds, as it had never occurred to them that any earthly creature could be given authority over everything including themselves. Some traditions too point to it. In this context the words, "what you were hiding", could easily be addressed to the angels.

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN : "*Prostrate before Adam*": Apparently it shows that prostration, *per se,* may be done before other than Allãh, if it is done in conformity with Allãh's command, as a mark of respect to that person. A similar case is found in the story of Yũsuf (a.s.): *And he raised his parents upon the throne and they* (all) *fell down in prostration before him, and he said*:

"O my father! this is the interpretation of my vision of old; my Lord has indeed made it to be true" (12:100).
This topic needs some clarification:

It was explained in the chapter of The Opening what the worship means. The worshipper places himself in the position of servitude and performs what manifests this status, what clearly shows that he accepts the mastership of his master. Those acts must be such as to show the master's mastership or the servant's servitude; for example, prostrating before the master, bowing down to him, standing before him when he sits, walking behind him when he walks etc. The more apt an action is to show this status, the more reserved it becomes to the rites of the divine worship. Prostration is the most significant symbol of the master's status and the servant's low rank, because the man in this act falls down and puts his forehead on the ground. For this reason, it has the strongest connection with the divine worship.

However, prostration is not the same thing as worship. They have two different meanings, and worship is not a quidditative substance of prostration. A quidditative characteristic can never be separated from any being. But prostration may be done with-out any thought of reverence or worship — for example, just to make fun of someone. Keeping this in view, it may safely be said that although the connection of prostration with divine worship is the strongest, that worship is not its quiddity. There-fore, prostration, *per se,* cannot be exclusively reserved for Allãh. If there is any impediment or obstruction, it should emanate from the *sharī'ah* or the reason. What the *sharī'ah* and the reason forbid is ascribing the prerogatives of the lordship to anyone other than Allãh. But they do not forbid honouring someone or according him respect when it is done without elevating him to godhead.

The discourse given above was from purely academic point of view. But the religious good taste, conditioned as it is

by rituals of worship, has strictly reserved the prostration for divine worship; it should not be done for anyone other than Allãh; in Islam, one is forbidden to prostrate before others even as a mark of respect.
Apart from prostration, there is no proof — either from the Qur'ãn and tradition or from reason and logic — against according respect and showing reverence to others than Allãh, especially when it is done as a part of the love of Allãh; examples may be given of revering and loving the good servants of Allãh and paying respects to the graves of the friends of Allãh or to the things attributed to them. There is no reason whatsoever why such actions should be prohibited. (We shall deal with this subject in a more appropriate place, God willing.)

TRADITIONS

Abu 'Abdillãh (a.s.) said: "When Allãh created Adam and ordered the angels to prostrate before him, it came into the angels' mind : 'We never thought that Allãh had created any creature more honourable than us; we are His neighbours, and we are the nearest of His creation to Him.' Thereupon Allãh said: 'Did I not say to you that I know what you manifest and what you were hiding?' — (it was) a reference to what they had mentioned concerning the affairs of the *jinn,* and had concealed what was in their own minds. So, the angels, who had said what they had said, took refuge with the Throne." (*at-Tafsīr,* al-'Ayyãshi)

Another tradition of the same theme is narrated in the same book from 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn (a.s.), the last part of which runs as follows: "When the angels realized that they had fallen into error, they took refuge with the Throne; and it was a group of the angels — and they were those who were around the Throne; it was not all the angels (who had thought

so). . . So, they have taken refuge with the Throne till the Day of Resurrection."

The author says: The theme of the two traditions may be inferred from the talk of the angels: "We celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness"; and "Glory be to Thee! we have no knowledge but that which Thou hast taught us; surely Thou, Thou (alone), art the Knowing, the Wise."

It will be explained later that the Throne means the divine knowledge, as the traditions narrated from the Imams of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) say. (Therefore, the angels' taking refuge with the Throne would refer to their confession that they knew only that which Allãh had taught them, and that only Allãh was the Knowing, the Wise.)

According to some traditions, the word "the unbelievers", (in the clause, "and he was one of the unbelievers") refers to the species, *jinn,* to which Iblīs belonged, and which was created before man. Allãh says: *And certainly We created man of clay that gives forth sound, of black mud fashioned into shape. And the jinn We created before of intensely hot fire* (15:26-27).

According to the above-mentioned traditions, the attribution of hiding to the angels (*what you were hiding*) needs no explanation; the clause means exactly what it says; the angels had actually hidden in their hearts the idea of their supremacy.

A third group of traditions says that the said clause refers to Iblīs and his hidden thought that he would not make obeisance to Adam and would not prostrate before him if asked to do so.

There is no contradiction between these various explanations, because all the meanings may be inferred from the Qur'ãnic verses. They are all true and based on fact. Various traditions throw light on various facets of the same fact.

Abũ Baṣīr said: "I said to Abu `Abdillãh (a.s.): 'Did the angels prostrate and put their foreheads on the earth?' He said: 'Yes, as an honour (bestowed on him) by Allãh.' " (*Qiṣaṣu 'l-anbiyã',* ar-Rãwandi)

The Imam said: "Verily the prostration of the angels before Adam was in obedience to Allãh and for their love of Adam." (*Tuḥafu 'l- `uqũl*)

Mũsa ibn J'far (peace be on them both) narrates through his forefathers that a Jew asked Amīru ' l -mu'minīn Ali (a.s.) about the miracles of the Prophet in comparison with the miracles of (other) prophets (in course of which) he said: "This is Adam before whom Allãh ordered His angels to prostrate." "Did He do any thing like it for Muhammad?" (a.s.) said: "It was so. But Allãh ordered His angels to prostrate before Adam; yet their prostration was not a prostration of worship; (it was not) that they had worshipped Adam against Allãh, Mighty and Great is He! It was rather as an acknowledgement of Adam's superiority and a mercy of Allãh towards him. And Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was given what was better than that. Verily Allãh, Great and High is He! blessed him in His omnipotence, and the angels, all of them, prayed for him, and the believers were obliged to pray for him. So this is the increase, O Jew!" (*al-Iḥtijãj*)

Allãh created Adam, and he remained for forty years in (that) shape (i.e. a statue without life). And Iblīs, the cursed, used to pass by him and say: "Why have you been created?" al-`Alīm (i.e. al-Kãḍim-a.s.) said: "Then Iblīs said: 'If Allãh ordered me to prostrate before this, I would certainly disobey Him.' . . . Then Allãh said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam'; all of them prostrated; but Iblīs showed the envy that was in his heart and he refused to prostrate." (*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummi)

Biḥãru 'l-anwãr narrates, quoting from *Qiṣaṣu 'l-anbiyã',* as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) that he said: "Iblīs was ordered to prostrate before Adam, and he said: 'O my Lord ! By Thy

honour! If Thou excusest me from prostrating before Adam, I would certainly worship Thee a worship no one would ever have worshipped Thee in a like manner.' Allãh, Great is His glory! said: 'I like to be worshipped according to My own pleasure.' "

The Imam also said: "Verily Iblīs cried aloud four times: First, on the day he was cursed, and the day he was dropped down to the earth, and the day Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was sent (as prophet) after a (long) interval of the apostles, and when the source of the Book was sent down. And he snorted (in satisfaction) twice: when Adam ate from the tree and when he (Adam) was sent down from the Garden."

And he said about the words of Allãh: *so their nakedness appeared unto them* (20:121): "Their nakedness was not seen before, then it was uncovered."

Also he said : "The tree from which Adam was forbidden (to eat) was the spikenard."

The author says: The traditions — and there are many — support what we have written about prostration.

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وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلاَ مِنْهَا رَغَداً
حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلاَ تَقْرَبَا هٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ــ ٣٥.
فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ
لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَى حِينٍ ــ ٣٦.
فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ــ ٣٧.
قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعاً فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ
فَلاَ خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلاَ هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ــ ٣٨. وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا
بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ــ ٣٩.

And We said: *"O Adam! dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat* (*you* both) *from it* (freely) *a plenteous* (food) *wherever you* (two) *wish and do not approach* (*you* two) *this tree, for then you* (two) *will be of the unjust"* (35). *But the Satan made them both slip from it and drove them out of what they were in; and We said*: *"Get down, some of you being the enemies of others; and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time"* (36). *Then Adam received* (some) *words from his Lord, so He returned to him mercifully; surely He is Oft-returning* (to mercy), *the Merciful* (37). *We said*: *"Get down you there-from all together; and if there comes to*

you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall

they grieve (38). *And* (*as* to) *those who disbelieve in, and belie, Our signs, they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide"* (39).

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COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *And We said*: *"*O *Adam! dwell you and your wife . . . "*: Although the story of the angels' prostration before Adam has been repeated several times in the Qur'ãn, that of his placement in the Garden has been given in three places only:

First: The verses given above, from Chapter 2 (the Cow).

Second: In Chapter 7 (the Elevated Places): *And* (We said): "O *Adam! dwell you and your wife in the Garden; so eat from where you desire, but do not go near this tree, for then you will be of the unjust"* (19) . *But the Satan whispered an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them what was hidden from them of their nakedness, and he said*: *"Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may* (not) *become of the immortals"* (20). *And he swore to them both*: *"Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you"* (21). *Then he caused them to fall by deceit; so when they tasted of the tree, their nakedness became manifest to them, and they both began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden; and their Lord called out to them*: *"Did I not forbid you both from that tree and say to you that the Satan is your open enemy?"* (22). *They said*: *"Our Lord! We have been unjust to ourselves, and if Thou forgive us not, and have* (not)

mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers" (23). *He said*: *"Get down, some of you being the enemies of others, and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time"* (24). *He* (also) *said*: *"Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and from it shall you be raised"* (25).

Third : In Chapter 20 (Ṭã-Hã): *And certainly We had covenanted unto Adam before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination* (115). *And when We said to the angels*: *"Prostrate before Adam*", *they did prostrate, but Iblīs* (did it not) ; *he refused* (116). *So We said. "*O *Adam! surely this is an enemy to you and to your wife; therefore let him not drive you both forth from the Garden so that you should be put to toil* (117); *Surely it is* (ordained) *for you that you shall not be hungry therein nor bare of clothing* (118) ; *and that you shall not be thirsty therein nor shall you feel the heat of the sun"* (119). *But the Satan whispered an evil suggestion to him; he said*: *"*O *Adam! shall I guide you to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which decays not?"* (120). *Then they both ate of it, so their nakedness appeared unto them, and they both began to cover themselves with leaves of the Garden, and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he got astray* (121). *Then his Lord chose him, so He turned to him and guided* (him) (122). *He said*: *"Get down you two therefrom, all* (*of you*), *one of you* (*is*) *enemy to another. So if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor be unhappy* (123). *And whoever turns away from My remembrance, his shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise him, on the Day of Resurrection, blind"* (124). *He shall say*: *"My Lord! why hast Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed?"* (125) *He will say*: *"Even so*: *Our signs came to you, but you forgot them; even thus shall you be forsaken this day"* (126). *And thus do We recompense him who is extravagant and does not believe in the signs of his Lord; and certainly the chastisement of the hereafter is severer and more lasting"* (127).

The context, and particularly the opening words *of* the story, "Verily I am going to make in the earth a vicegerent", clearly show that it was for the earth that Adam was created; it was the original plan that he should live and die in the earth. Allãh had temporarily placed the couple in the Garden to test them in order that their nakedness might be uncovered to them. Also the context in all three places shows that the order to the angels to prostrate before Adam, and then to Adam to stay in the Garden is a single, continuous, story. It all shows that Adam (a.s.) was created specifically for the earth, and the way to send him down was through the Garden as mentioned in the Qur'ãn: It was shown that he was superior to the angels and, therefore, more qualified for the vicegerency of Allãh; then they were told to prostrate before him, in acknowledgement of his superiority; then he was placed in the Garden but forbidden to go near a particular tree; so that on eating from it they should become aware of their nakedness and then be sent down to the earth. It means that the last link in this chain was their becoming aware of their private parts — it was this factor which irrevocably showed that they were fit for this earth, ready for this life. "*as-Saw'ah*",(اَلسَّوْأَةُ , literally means shame, disgrace, private part of the of the body. In this story it has been used in the last meaning, as may be seen from the words, "and they both began to cover them-selves with leaves of the Garden". That is why we have translated it as "nakedness".) However, their awareness of their pudenda proved that in addition to their spiritual qualities, they had also animal instincts and desires ingrained in them. It naturally made them dependent on nutrition and growth. Iblīs wanted them to become aware of their nakedness. Adam and his wife were given earthly, human existence and were at once placed in the Garden without any delay; they were not given time to perceive and understand their nakedness or its concomitants; they had not yet comprehended the life of this earth and its necessities. When they were sent to the Garden their connection with the

spiritual world, including the angels, was strong; their link with it was not weakened. It should be noted that Allãh has said, "what was hidden from them"; He has not said, "what had been hidden from them"; it may be inferred from the expression used that their nakedness could not remain hidden for ever in this life; it was hidden for only a short period when they were placed in the Garden. The uncovering of their nakedness with all its concomitants was a predetermined fact and it depended upon their eating from that tree. That is why Allãh had told them: "therefore let him not drive you both forth from the Garden so that you should be put to toil"; thereafter, the Satan "drove them out of what they were in".

It should not be overlooked that even when Allãh pardoned them after their repentance, He did not return them to the Garden — they were sent down to the earth to live therein. If their eating of the tree, the uncovering of their private parts and the life of this world- were not a confirmed divine plan, an irrevocable pre-determined decree, they would have been returned to their place in the Garden as soon as they were forgiven their mistake. In short, it was the divine plan that they should spend sometime in the Garden to get them prepared for the life in this world; and their removal from the Garden, according to the causal relation decreed by Allãh, depended on their eating from the tree and becoming aware of their nakedness, and it happened because they listened to the whispering of the Satan.

Allãh says: "And certainly We had covenanted unto Adam before, but he forgot". Which covenant does this verse allude to? Does it refer to the admonition, "and do not approach (you two) this tree, for then you (two) will be of the unjust"? Or to the warning, "surely this (i.e., the Satan) is an enemy to you and to your wife"? Or does it refer to the general covenant made with all human beings in general and with the prophets in particular?

The first possibility is out of question altogether. Allãh says: "But the Satan whispered an evil suggestion to them . . .

and he said: 'Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not become two angels or that you may (not) become of the immortals . . .' " Obviously, when Adam and his wife committed the error and tasted of the tree they were aware of the prohibition — even the evil suggestion of the Satan had begun with a reference to it. And Allãh says in this verse that "We had covenanted unto Adam before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination." It, therefore, could not refer to that prohibition, because Adam had not forgotten it at all.

The second suggestion — that the covenant might refer to the warning against the Satan — is not so wide of mark; still it is not supported by apparent meaning of the verses. The said warning was given to both Adam and his wife, while this verse refers to a covenant made especially with Adam.

It leaves us with the last alternative that the covenant means the general covenant which was made with the whole mankind and more particularly with the prophets. This verse (about the covenant with Adam and his forgetting it) occurs at the beginning of the story in the chapter of Ṭã-Hã; and the story concludes with the words, "So if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor be unhappy. And whoever turns away from My remembrance, his shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise him, on the Day of Resurrection, blind. He shall say: 'My Lord! why halt Thou raised me blind, and I was a seeing one indeed?' He will say: 'Even so: Our signs came to you, but you forgot them; even thus shall you be forsaken (literally: forgotten) today.' "

These concluding verses perfectly fit that opening one. To turn away from the remembrance of Allãh is not different from forgetting the covenant of Allãh. Add to it the use of the same verb (*you forgot them*) in the next verse. All these references are perfectly compatible with the covenant made with the souls of the human beings about the Mastership of Allãh and their own servitude. That covenant obliged the man

that he should never forget that Allãh is his Lord, the Ruler and Master of his affairs; nor should he lose sight of the fact that he is a wholly owned slave of Allãh; that he has no authority whatsoever over his benefit or harm; nor does he has any control over his life, death or resurrection; in short he owns neither his person, his characteristics nor his actions.

The error that stands opposite to this remembrance is forgetfulness — man forgets his Lord and His All-encompassing Mastership; he becomes engrossed in his own self, getting bogged down more and more in the mire of this world's attractions.

Look at this world's life, with all its diversity; and see how it spreads its tentacles in all directions. Note how it is shared by the believer and the unbeliever both. And then find out how the two groups respond to its joy and sorrow. How different is their respective attitude towards this life's success and failure, happiness and unhappiness, content and discontent, relief and suffering. These factors affect the two groups — the believers and the unbelievers — in entirely different ways. The believer has the know-ledge of Allãh and the unbeliever lacks this knowledge. And it causes all the differences in their respective behaviour. Every man looks at this world; a world that is submerged in all types of misfortunes and disasters: a life followed by death, a health ruined by disease, a prosperity eaten away by poverty, a comfort destroyed by discomfort, a gain nullified by loss — this is, in a nut-shell, the life of this world. The believer knows that everything and every affair belongs to Allãh; nothing is independent of God, the Lord. Every thing and every affair emanates from Him; and all that originates from Him is good and beautiful; nothing but beauty and splendour, goodness and excellence, can come from Him. And because all things and all affairs issue forth from his Lord and Master, he thinks that all is elegant and fine; he dislikes nothing and fears nothing; everything in his eyes is likeable, except that which his Master tells him to dislike. He subjugates

his likes and dislikes to those of his Master. In short, all his attention is fixed to the pleasure of his Master. He knows that everything is the sole property of God; none else has any share in anything . That being the case, why should he worry how the Master manages His own property? He does not think that he is competent to meddle in the affairs of his Lord. This submission to Allãh creates a perfect tranquillity, a truly happy life, untarnished by unhappiness; a light without darkness, a joy without sorrow, a benefit without harm, and a riches without want. It all happens because he believes in Allãh and in His mastership.

On the other hand is the unbeliever who does not know Allãh. By cutting himself off from the one and only Master, he has to bow his head before every creature. He believes that every-thing is independent in its actions — that it has a power of its own to benefit or to harm, to do good or evil. Consequently, he remains in constant fear of everything; he is ever apprehensive of every real or imagined danger. He is always grieving for want has befallen him, longing for the opportunities he has missed. He feels nostalgia for the prestige or wealth that is gone; breaks his heart for the children, relatives or friends who have left him. He is inextricably trapped by the attractions of the world; he relies on them and has trust in them; and when any thing goes wrong, he sinks into despair. Then as soon as he makes a virtue of necessity and is resigned to that misfortunate, a new calamity overwhelms him. In this way, he is always driven from pillar to post, with a heavy heart and a gloomy countenance; "thus does Allãh lay uncleanliness on those who do not believe".

It can be seen, in the light of the above discourse, that forgetting the covenant and unhappiness of this world's life, both are interrelated — the later springs from the former. This fact becomes clearer if we compare the wordings of the verse 20: 123 -124 with those used in the verse under discussion. The former says: *So if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor be unhappy. And whoever turns away from My remembrance,*

his shall surely be a straitened life, and We will raise him, on the Day of Resurrection, blind. And the same idea has been expressed in this verse in the following words: . . . *then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.*

It may be inferred from these verses that the forbidden tree was of such a nature that if one ate from it he would certainly be entangled in the troubles and misfortunes of this life — he would spend his life in this world, heedless of his own place, forgetting his Lord. Probably Adam (a. s.) wanted to combine the fruit of that tree with the covenant that he had entered into with his Lord. But he could not succeed; the fruit had its effect, he forgot the covenant and fell into the troubles and toils of this world. Then he was saved when he repented before Allãh and Allãh turned to him with mercy.

QUR'ÃN: *and eat* (*you* two) *from it* (freely) *a plenteous* (food): "*ar-Raghad*" (اَلرَّغَدُ) literally means happiness, well-being, good life and affluence. *arghada 'l-qawmu mawãshiyahum* (اَرْغَدَ الْقَومُ مَوَاشِيَهُمْ) means, "the people left their cattle to graze wherever it liked. "*Qawmun raghad*" (قَوْمٌ رَغَدٌ) and "*nisã'un raghad*" (نِسَاءٌ رَغَدٌ) means people (or women) having a life of plenty and opulence.

QUR'ÃN: *and do not approach* (you two) *this tree;* The context shows that actual prohibition was of eating from it; but they were told not even to approach it; the prohibition was couched in these terms for emphasis. What was really forbidden is seen from the verse: *so when they tasted of the tree, their nakedness became manifest to them* (7:22)*,* and . . . *they both ate of it, so their nakedness appeared unto them* (20:121).

QUR'ÃN: *for then you* (two) *will be of the unjust* : *"aḍ-*

Ḍãlimīn" (اَلظّالِمِيْنَ) is the *nomen agentis of aḍ-Ḍulm* (اَلظُّلْمُ = injustice, to do wrong). It is not from *aḍ-Ḍulmah* (الظُّلْمَةُ = darkness), as has been suggested by someone. Adam and his wife acknowledged their wrong-doing, and the Qur'ãn quotes them as saying: "*Our Lord! we have been unjust to ourselves, and if Thou forgive us not, and have* (not) *mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers"* (7:23).

This clause has been changed in Chapter 20 to "so that you should be put to toil"; and the toil has further been explained in these words: *Surely it is* (ordained) *for you that you shall not be hungry therein* (*i.e.* in the Garden) *nor bare of clothing; and that you shall not be thirsty therein nor shall you feel the heat of the sun* (20:118-119). Clearly, the injustice and wrong-doing, mentioned in the verse 2:25, was to bring in its wake the toil *of* this world — hunger, thirst, nakedness and other discomforts. The injustice or wrong that they had done was against their own selves; it was neither a sin (as this term is used in the *shari'ah*) nor an injustice against Allãh. It shows that the prohibition was in the nature *of* an advice pointing out to them what was good for their own comfort; it did not have the force *of* an ordained law. Adam and his wife did wrong to themselves, because their disregard to that divine advice caused their removal from the Garden.

When a man commits a sin (i.e. an offence, from the *sharī'ah* point of view), he is given a punishment. Then if he repents and his repentance is accepted, the punishment is completely waived off, and he is returned to his previous position as though he had not committed the sin at all. If Adam and his wife were guilty of such a sin, they should have been returned to their place in the Garden soon after their repentance was accepted. But it was not done. It clearly shows that the prohibition did not have the force of an ordained law; it was only an advice. Even so, neglecting it had its natural effect on both *of* them and they had to come out of the Garden. But this removal from the Garden was not a punishment for any sin or

crime; it was the natural consequence of the wrong they had done against their own selves. (We shall write again on this subject, God willing.)

QUR'ÃN : *But the Satan made them both slip from it*: The Satan could have misled them by creating evil thoughts in their hearts, in the same way as he misleads other human beings. But many verses, in the three narratives quoted at the beginning of this commentary, show that the Satan had appeared before Adam and his wife, and had talked to them face to face:

So We said: *"O Adam! surely this is an enemy to you and to your wife"* (20:117). Allãh had pointed out the Satan to Adam, not by any verbal description but by showing to him the person of the said enemy. (Note the demonstrative pronoun, "this is".)

(The Satan) *said*: *"O Adam! shall I guide you to the tree of immortality . . ."* (20:120). The speaker, that is, the Satan, must have talked to Adam face to face.

And he (*i.e.* the Satan) *swore to them both*: *"Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you"* (7:21). Obviously, he was visible to Adam and his wife and swore during his talk with them.

. . . and their Lord called out to them: *"Did I not forbid you both from that tree and say to you that the Satan is your open enemy?"* (7:22) It indicates that the Satan was visible to Adam and his wife. If the Satan had misled them by creating evil thoughts into their minds without appearing before them, they could have said to Allãh that they were not aware that that thought was put into their minds by the Satan; that they mistook it to be their own thought because the Satan had not appeared before them.

They used to see and recognize the Satan. Likewise, other prophets — all of them covered by Allãh's protection — used to see and recognize him if and when he came to them. Many traditions mention such encounters in the stories of Nũh, Ibrãhim,

Mũsã, `Isã, Yaḥyã, Ayyũb, Ismãīl and Muḥammad (may Allãh bless him and his progeny as well as the prophets). The above-quoted verses as well as the verse 7:20 (*and he said*: *"Your Lord has not forbidden from this tree except that . . ."*) also show that the Satan had visited then near that tree in the Garden. He entered the Garden, talked to them and put evil suggestion before them. He was able to do so because the Garden was not the Garden of eternal abode. The Qur'ãn also says that Adam, his wife and the Satan all were removed from the Garden together. (Of course, Allãh had said to the Satan: "*Then get down from this, for it does not befit you to behave proudly therein*" [7:13]. But the pronouns "this" and "therein" may refer to the angels or to the heaven. It may mean: Get down from the company of the angels; or, get down from the heaven as it is a place of honour.)

QUR'ÃN: *and We said*: *"Get down, some of you being the enemies of others . . .*": The second person pronouns, used in this verse, are plural, which denote at least three persons. Clearly, it was addressed to Adam, his wife and the Satan. The Satan was turned out of the heaven and/or the company of the angels before (as described above). This verse combines in itself that previous order too; and manifests the firm decree of Allãh establishing enmity between Iblīs on one side and Adam and his wife and their descendants on the other. It also promulgates another decree that they shall live in the earth, die therein, and be raised again from it.

It may safely be said that the whole human race (Adam together with his descendants) is covered by the last mentioned decree: *Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and from it shall you be raised* (7:25). This verse comes at the end of the story (in Chapter 7) which begins with the following words: *And certainly We created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels*: "*Prostrate before Adam*" . . . (7:11). In both verses plural pronouns have been used; and it is

an indication that the creation and the decree to live and die in the earth includes more than two, that is, other human beings too besides Adam and his wife.
The story of Adam may have been used by Allãh to represent the rise, fall and rise again of the whole mankind. Adam was the first representatives of humanity, and his life was a symbol, a miniature, of the human beings life-span in this world.

The angels were told to prostrate before Adam, because he was the vicegerent of Allãh in the earth. It has been mentioned earlier that this vicegerency was bestowed on the whole mankind. The angels prostrated before Adam, as he was the symbol of humanity, the representative of his race.

Adam and his wife were placed in the Garden and then were sent down from there because they had eaten of the for-bidden tree. Every man may see his own face in this mirror. His soul, before coming to this world, enjoyed the sublime and lofty existence; his abode was spiritually near to his Lord — a place of joy and happiness, of splendour and light; in the company of purified companions and spiritual friends, near to Allãh, the Lord of the worlds. Then he opted for this transient life, and was at once entangled in the troubles and toils of this world; leaving that purified existence, he was attracted to this tedious and odious life.

Adam at once repented and prayed for the mercy of Allãh. In the same way, man may return to Allãh and consequently to the eternal abode of honour and bliss. But if he took the wrong turning, did not try to return to Allãh, and, in short, followed his base desires, he would change the bounty of Allãh into disbelief and ungratefulness, would direct himself to the place of disgrace — to the hell; and how evil that resting place is!

QUR'ÃN: *Then Adam received* (some) *words from his Lord. so He returned to him mercifully*: "*at-Talaqqī*" (اَلتَّلَقّي = to receive) signifies "to learn". It was this learning of the words that paved the way for the repentance of Adam.

"*at-Tawbah*" (اَلتَّوْبَةُ) literally means to return; generally it is used for repentance, because when a man repents, he returns to his Lord. This verb is at times ascribed to Allãh (as in this verse), and signifies that Allãh returns or restores the servant to His grace and mercy. In other words, He accepts the plea of the servant and forgives his sins. At other times it is attributed to the servant; then it signifies the servant's return to Allãh, that is, his repentance from his sins.

at-Tawbah (repentance) of man is flanked on both sides by two *tawbahs* (mercies) of Allãh. Man can never do without the mercy of Allãh. He needs mercy and help of Allãh to turn away from sins; only then he may return to Allãh, may repent from his sins; then again the mercy of Allãh comes forward, and his repentance is accepted. Therefore, an accepted repentance of man issues forth from the mercy of Allãh, and also ends on His mercy. The verse 9:118 clearly mentions this fact: *then He returned to them* (mercifully) *so that they might return* (i.e. might repent).

What were the words which Adam received from his Lord? Some people think that it refers to their invocation reported in Chapter 7: *They said*: *"Our Lord! We have been unjust to our-selves, and if Thou forgive us not, and have* (not) *mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers"* (7:23). But this view is not supported by the sequence of the events. Adam and his wife had addressed that invocation before they were told to get down from the Garden (7:24); and it was after getting that order that he "received some words" from Allãh, as is clear from the verse 2: 36-37. Therefore, "some words" cannot refer to that previously uttered invocation.

There may, however, be another explanation: When Allãh announced to the angels that He was going to make a vicegerent in the earth, they said: "Wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, while we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness?" Allãh did not say that their accusation against the would be vicegerent was wrong; His

only answer was that He taught Adam all the names. There must have been some-thing deep, meaningful and relevant in this teaching of the names; otherwise, the angels could not be satisfied, their objection could not be answered. The names taught to Adam must have contained some such thing that would come to the rescue of man if he sinned, would save him from disgrace if he erred. Probably, the words received at the time of repentance were related to the names taught to him in the beginning.

It cannot be denied that Adam (a.s.) did wrong to himself by placing himself in this world — a crossroads of happiness and unhappiness; had he been ensnared by it he would have perished; but he chose to return to his original place of spiritual bliss and was saved; he had to undergo, in this process, untold miseries and unbearable hardships. In any case, he put himself in so much trouble that he became "unjust" to himself. The question arises as to why Allãh selected this hard way to send him from the Garden to the earth. The fact, however, remains that in this process he attained to such heights of eternal bliss and spiritual perfection as would have been impossible to reach without coming down to the earth — and that too with a stigma of mistake.

The events leading to his removal from the Garden and, later, to the acceptance of his repentance showed to him his true reality — how humble, dependent, deficient and servile he was; and at the same time he came to realize that every difficulty of this world leads to manifold ease in the next life; every unpleasantness here results in enhanced pleasantness there; every trouble in the obedience to Allãh brings in its wake the pleasure of Allãh and His unlimited reward; the process continues until the servant reaches the sublime presence of his Lord. Adam knew, through his own experience, taste of many of the beautiful attributes of Allãh: His forgiveness, turning mercifully to the servants, covering their mistakes, bestowing mercy on them, putting them in the shadow of His compassion and grace — these are some of the divine attributes which He

has especially reserved for the sinners. Adam could not know and understand them without passing through the stages which Allãh had decreed for him.

This, however, was his repentance; it made ordination of a *shari`ah* essential. It was necessary for Adam and his descendants to know which path they should take so as to reach their destination, the abode of bliss and happiness. His repentance brought him to the stage where promulgation of religion and ordination of the *shari`ah* was inevitable.
That is why Allãh frequently mentions the repentance before the belief: *Stand fast then* (in the right path) *as you are commanded, as also he who has turned* (to Allãh) *with you . . .* (11:112); *And most surely I am most forgiving to him who repents and believes and does good. . .* (20:82). There are many such verses in the Qur'ãn.

QUR'ÃN: *We said*: *"Get down you therefore all together; and if there comes to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. And* (as to) *those who disbelieve in, and belie, Our signs, they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide".*

This is the essence of religion ordained, for the first time, for Adam (a.s.) and his descendants. Allãh has condensed the whole religion in these two sentences; nothing has been added, nor can be added to it upto the Day of Resurrection.

Ponder on this story and particularly the narrative of Chapter 20. You will see that Allãh had issued two decrees in respect of Adam and his descendants. When he ate from the tree, it was decreed that he should get down to the earth and spend his life therein — a life of trouble and toil. And when he repented, it was ordained that he and his descendants should be honoured with divine guidance. The first decree initiated the earthly life for him; the second, issued after his repentance, bestowed dignity and grace to that life, by providing it with divine guidance. From then on, man's life is composed of two lives: A material, earthly

life and a spiritual, heavenly one. It may be inferred from repetition of the order to "get down" in this narrative: "*Get down, some of you being the enemies of others; and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time"* (2:36). *"Get down you therefrom all together; and if there comes to you a guidance from Me. . ."* (2:38).

Repentance of Adam (2:37) occurred between these two orders. The sequence shows that Adam had repented before their departing from the Garden, although he had slipped from his earlier position of honour.-It may also be. inferred from the change in the styles of the following verses: Allãh said to Adam, when placing him in the Garden, "*do not go near this tree"* (7:19) ; but when they ate from it, *their Lord called out to them*: *"Did I not forbid you both from that tree. . ."* (7:22). Note the demonstrative pronoun, "this" (for a nearer object) in the former speech, and "that" (for a farther one) in the latter. Also contrast the verb, "said" (showing proximity) of the former with "called out" (showing distance) of the latter. All this together supports the above-given explanation that at the time of the second order Adam was still in the Garden but not in his earlier honoured place.

"Get down, some of you being the enemies of others; and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time" (2:36;7:24). *"Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and from it shall you be raised"* (7:25). The verses indicate that the life on the earth was very different from that in the Garden. This life is firmly connected with the earth, full of difficulties and hardships. Man, in this life, is created from the earth, then after death is returned into it, and will, on the Day of Resurrection, be raised from it. This life is different from that of the Garden. It follows that Adam had lived a heavenly — and not earthly — life in the Garden.

This observation gives us a certainty that the Garden of Adam was in the heaven, although it was not the Garden of eternal abode from which one is never turned out.

What is meant by “the heaven”? We shall, God willing explain it somewhere else.

Now, we come to the mistake of Adam. The explanation given under various verses throws sufficient light on this subject. But the importance of the topic justifies its recapitulation in a systematic way:

The verses obviously say that he had committed a mistake and disobeyed the divine command: “. . . for then you (two) will be of the unjust”; “and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he got astray”; and they too acknowledged their error: “Our Lord! We have been unjust to ourselves, and if Thou forgive us not, and have (not) mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers.” But on meditating on the verses, and particularly on the admonition not to eat of the tree, we come to a definite conclusion that the said prohibition was not in the nature of an authoritative command; it was rather like an advice to guide Adam to his good and comfort. The following proof irresistibly lead us to this conclusion:

First: Allãh said in this, as well as in Chapter 7, that eating of the tree would be an injustice, a wrong-doing (*for then you two will be of the unjust*). The same result has been described as “toil” (*so that you should be put to toil*); and the “toil” has been explained in the terms of worldly needs and troubles, because it was ordained “for you that you shall not be hungry therein (i.e., as long as you remained in the Garden) nor bare of clothing; and that you shall not be thirsty therein nor shall you feel the heat of the sun”. It seems clear that it was to protect them from these worldly troubles and toils that they were told not to go near that tree. The prohibition, therefore, was not more than an advice; certainly it was not an authoritative command. Going against an advice does not entail a sin, does not involve rebellion against the adviser. The injustice, mentioned in this story, therefore, means their doing wrong against their own selves, putting themselves in this world's hardship and toil; but it cannot mean the sin committed by a servant against his master.

Second: When a servant repents, that is, returns to Allãh, his Lord, and the Lord accepts that repentance, all the effects of the sin are erased, as though he had not committed any sin at all. If the prohibition against eating from the tree had the force of an authoritative command, an ordained law, Adam and his wife should have been returned to their place in the Garden as soon as their repentance was accepted. But they were not. It decisively proves that the prohibition was of advisory nature like telling someone not to put his hand in a fire; if he does not listen to the advice, his hand would certainly burn, and the subsequent apology would not unburn it, even if the apology was accepted. Likewise, Adam and his wife disregarded the advice, and as a result of eating from the tree, had to go out of the Garden and live in the earth a life of trial and hardship. Their repentance could not take them back to the Garden as their coming to the earth was the natural and inevitable result of that action.

The prohibition, in short, was no a law ordained by the Master — like the announcement that a man who neglects to pray would enter the Fire; or the one who disobeys the rules of the *sharī`ah* would be punished. If it were like such a command, the repentance would have rubbed out the effect of disobedience and they would have been sent back to the Garden straight away.

Third: *We said*: *"Get down you therefrom all together; and if there comes to you a guidance from* Me, *then whoever follows* My *guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve. And* (as to) *those who disbelieve in, and belie, Our signs, they are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide."* These verses have put in a nutshell all the detailed laws, rules, and regulations sent by Allãh for the mankind, through His angels, books and apostles. And it was the first *sharī`ah* which Allãh ordained for the world, the world of Adam and his descendants. It was ordained after the second order to "get down" — and the order to "get down" was not a legislative, but a creative, command, resulting from his eating of the tree.

It means that at the time when Adam partook of the tree, no

sharī`ah was ordained yet, and no law was promulgated. Therefore, whatever Adam did was not a transgression against any law of the *sharī'ah,* nor was there any sin or crime involved in acting against that advice.

Question: The order to the angels and Iblīs co prostrate before Adam was an authoritative command, and it was given before the order to Adam not to go near that tree. Therefore, it is difficult to believe that at that time there was no obligatory law.

Reply: We are talking about Adam and his descendants, and not about the angels and Iblīs. It is irrelevant whether the angels and Iblīs were given a compulsory order before Adam was placed in the Garden.

Question: If the prohibition were of an advisory nature, Allãh would not have described its disregard in the terms of "injustice", "disobedience", and "going astray".

Reply: We have already explained that the "injustice" done by Adam and his wife was against their own selves; it was not a sin against Allãh.

"*al-'Iṣyãn*" (اَلعِصْيانُ = disobedience) literary means to resist, or to yield with difficulty. The Arab say; I broke it and it was broken; I broke it *fa-'aṣã* (فعَصى =) but it resisted, or

"*al-Ghawãyah*" (اَلْغَوَايَةُ = to go astray) literally means inability of a man to look after his interests; not managing one's affairs properly. This word by itself does not indicate committing a sin or crime. It is the context that determines its value. Its emphasis changes depending on whether the neglected order was an advice or an authoritative command.

Question: Then why did they repent? Why did they say, "and if Thou forgive us not, and have (not) mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers?"

Reply: *at-Tawbah* (repentance) means to turn to. And the word can be used in various meanings, depending on context.

A servant rebels against his master, and thereafter returns to him and asks for his forgiveness; the master, if he so wishes, pardons him, and gives him his previous rank and position.

A doctor tells a patient not to eat certain fruits, lest his illness be prolonged or the disease be complicated. The patient

yielded to my pressure with difficulty. Not heeding an order is called *al-`iṣyãn,* because one does not yield to that enjoinment or prohibition. This resistance may occur against an advice as much as against 'a compulsory order. The word in itself does not imply sinning; it all depends on the nature of the order that was disregarded.

Of course, nowadays we, the Muslims, use this word as synonymous to sinning. And now it has become a terminology of the *sharī`ah* (or of the Muslims), used for disobedience to an authoritative command. But this later transformance cannot effect its original or literal meaning for which it was used in the Qur'ãn.

disregards the prohibition and, as a result, puts his life in danger. Now he feels embarrassed and repents before the doctor, asking for his forgiveness, begging him to prescribe for him a

medicine to enable him to regain his health and vigour. The doctor may tell him that now it will be necessary for him to undergo a long and difficult treatment, adding that if he persevered in the prescribed regimen his health would be much better than before.

The significance of the other words used in the narrative, like forgiveness, mercy and loss, may likewise change with the context.

TRADITIONS

al-Qummī (Ali) narrates, in his *at-Tafsīr,* from his father (Ibrãhīm ibn Hãshim) who narrates, from aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) (omitting the chain of intervening narrators, although it was fully described by his Shaykh). He said: "as-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) was asked about the Garden of Adam whether it was a garden of this world or one of the hereafter's. He (a.s.) said: 'It was a garden of this world, wherein the sun and the moon rose. Had it been a Garden of the hereafter, he would have not come out of it.' He (a.s.) further said: 'Allãh placed him in the Garden and allowed him its freedom with exception of the tree. (It was done) because here was a creature of Allãh who could not survive without (some) enjoinment and prohibition, nor (could it continue) without food, cloth, shelter and marriage; nor could he know, without divine help, what was beneficial to him from what was harmful.' Then came to him Iblīs and told him: "If you (two) ate from this tree, which Allãh has forbidden you, you (two) would become two angels and would abide in the Garden for ever; and if you (two) did not eat from it, Allãh would turn you out from the Garden;" and he swore to them that he was a sincere adviser to them; as

Allãh quotes his words: *Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may* (not) *become of the immortals. And he swore to them both*: *"Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you."* Adam believed in his words, and they (i.e. Adam and his wife) ate from the tree; and they became as Allãh says: *their nakedness became manifest to them*; what Allãh had clothed them with of the (attires of the) Garden dropped away from them, and they both began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden; and their Lord called out to them: *Did I not forbid you both from that tree and say to you that the Satan is your open enemy?* They said, as Allãh quotes them: "*Our Lord! We have been unjust to ourselves;and if Thou forgive us not, and have* (not) *mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers."* Thereupon Allãh said to them: "*Get down, some of you being the enemies of others; and there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time." ' "* He (the Imam) said: "that (time) is the Day of Resurrection". He further said: "Then Adam descended on the (hill of) aṣ-Ṣafã — and it got this name because Ṣaf`īyu 'llãh (صَفِيُّ اللهِ = the sincere friend of Allãh, i.e. Adam) came down on it; and Ḥawwã' (Eve) descended on the (hill of) al-Marwah — and it was named al-Marwah because *al-mar 'ah* (اَلْمَرْءَةُ = the woman) descended on it. The Adam remained in prostration for forty days, weeping for the Garden. So Jibrīl (Gabriel) came to him and said: 'Did Allãh not create you with His hand, and (did He not) breath into you from His spirit, and (did He not) made His angels prostrate before you?' He said: 'Certainly.' (Then Jibrīl said:) 'and He ordered you not to eat from the tree and you disobeyed Him?'

Adam said: ‘Iblīs swore to me falsely.’ ”

The author says: There are other traditions too from *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) to the effect that the Garden of Adam was of this world; although some of them are from the same Ibrãhīm ibn Hãshim.

The phrase, “a garden of this world”, has been used in contrast to the Garden of everlasting abode. It indicates a state between this world and the hereafter. Adam's garden was not the Garden of everlasting abode, but neither was it a garden like that of ours *al-Barzakh* (اَلبَرزَخُ) is the state, place and time between one's death and the Day of Resurrection. The said Garden may be called a Garden of al-Barzakh, and it may well have been situated in this world. The sentences, “Adam descended on the (hill of) aṣ-Ṣafã”, and “Ḥawwã' descended on the (hill of) al-Marwah”, indicate that, before it, they were somewhereabove this world. The interpretation of “a time” with the “Day of Resurrection” is also revealing. Man remains in al-Barzakh after his death, and at the same time he remains in the earth. Many Qur’ãnic verses use these expressions interchangeably.
For example: *He will say*: *“How many years did you tarry in the earth?” They will say*: *“We tarried a day or part of a day*”, *but ask those who keep account. He will say*: *“You did tarry but a little — had you but known* (*it*)*”* (23:112-114). *And at the time when the Hour shall come, the guilty shall swear* (that) *they did not tarry but an hour; thus they used to utter lies. And those who are given knowledge and faith will say*: *“Certainly you tarried according to the decree of Allãh till the Day of Resurrection, but you did not know”* (30:55 - 56).

Apart from that, many traditions of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) show that the Garden of Adam was in the heaven, and that he and his wife descended from the heaven. For the one who is

familiar with the language of traditions, it is not difficult to believe that the said Garden was in the heaven and that they had descended from the heaven to the earth, even if they were created in the earth itself and live therein all along. These expressions are not any different from those which say that the Garden is in the heaven, and yet say that the grave is an orchard from the orchards of the Garden or a pit from the pits of the Fire. Many similar expressions are found in the traditions. Any lingering doubt will be removed when we shall write about the heaven, God willing.

There is no mention in the correct and reliable traditions as to how Iblīs found his way to Adam and his wife, or as to what means he adopted for this purpose. Some traditions mention the serpent and peacock as the two helpers of Iblīs in his endeavour to mislead Adam and his wife; but they are extremely unreliable. Obviously, such traditions were interpolated under the influence of Judaism. This story has been taken from the Jews, and to make this point clear, we are quoting it from the Bible (King James version). The story is given in the book of Genesis:

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth towards the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates. And the Lord God took the man, and put him

into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God has made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them

both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of the life; And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it,bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know

good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Genesis, ch. 2: vs. 7 to ch. 3: vs. 24)

Compare the narrative of the Qur'ãn with that of the Bible, then ponder on various traditions narrated in the Shi'ah or Sunni books; you will come to know many revealing differences. But we are not going into it because it is beyond the scope of this book.

Question: How could Iblīs enter the Garden and mislead Adam therein? The question arises because:

i) the Garden is a place of cleanliness and purity, *wherein there shall be nothing vain nor any sin* (52:23) ;

ii) The garden is in the heaven, and Iblīs was already turned out therefrom when he refused to prostrate before Adam. *Then get out of it, for surely you are driven away* (15:34). *Then get down from this, for it does not befit you to behave proudly therein* (7:13).

Reply: (i) The Qur'ãn disallows vain and sinful acts in the Garden of eternal abode (in which the believers shall be placed after resurrection) and the Garden of al-Barzakh wherein they are placed after death. But it is silent about the Garden of Adam, in which he was placed together with his wife before man was sent to this world and given any authoritative law. Rather, it may be said that it shows not only possibility of disobedience therein, but also its occurrence. Proof: This very disobedience of Adam and his wife.

Moreover, vanity and sin are relative terms; and they do not occur until man comes into this world, and is given some authoritative laws to follow.

ii) The argument may be replied as follows:

a. It cannot be definitely said that the clauses, "get down

of it" and "get down from this" were meant to turn Iblīs out of the heaven, because "the heaven" has not been mentioned in preceding sentences. The order, therefore, could mean, 'get out of the ranks of the angels', or 'get down from the honour and dignity given to thee'.

b. May be, the order to get down or to get out meant only that he could not live or stay in the heaven with the angels. If so, then it was not a prohibition against occasionally going or ascending thereto. This interpretation is supported by the verses which describe the Satans' occasional goings upto the heaven to eavesdrop the conversations of the angels.[1] Also,

c. it has been narrated that before the time of 'Isã (a.s.) , the Satans were going up to the seventh heaven; when he was born they were barred from the fourth heaven and above; then after the birth of the Prophet they were barred from all the heavens.

d. There is no mention in the Book of Allãh that Iblīs had entered the Garden. Therefore, the question does not arise at all. It has, of course, been narrated in the traditions; but they are not *al-mutawãtir;* and possibly the narrators have described the story in their own words, and not exactly as the Imam said. Utmost that may be put as evidence that Iblīs had entered the Garden is the verse: *and he* (*i.e.* the Satan) *said.* *"Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not become two angels . . ."* (7:19), as he had used the pronoun, "this", ("this tree") which denotes nearness. But if it is taken to mean nearness in place, it would give the same meaning in Allãh's command, . . . *do not go near this tree* (7:18). Surely it, cannot be said that the pronoun

1. For example: *And We have guarded it* (*i.e.* the heaven) *against every accursed Satan, but he who steals a hearing; so there follows him a visible flame* (15:17-18).

indicates that Allãh was in that place near the tree [1]

`Abdu's-Salãm al-Harawi [2] said: "I said to ar-Riḍã (a.s.):

'O son of the Messenger of Allãh! tell me about the tree from which Adam and Ḥawwã' ate, what was it? Because people do have different views about it; some have narrated that it was a wheat-plant, and others have reported that it was the tree of envy.' He said: 'All this is true.' I said: 'Then what do these explanations, with their differences, mean?' He said: 'O son of aṣ-Ṣalt! verily the tree of the Garden bears (fruits of) many kinds; and it was a wheat-plant and (yet) it bore grapes; and it was not like a tree of this world. And when Allãh raised the status of Adam by making the angels prostrate before him and by placing him in the Garden, he said: "Has Allãh created any man superior than me?" And Allãh knew what had came into his mind; so He called out to him: "Raise your head, O Adam! and look at the pillar of the Throne." So, he looked at the pillar of the Throne and found written on it: "There is no god except Allãh; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allãh; ibn Abi Ṭãlib is the Leader of the faithful, and his wife, Fãṭimah is the Chief of the women of the worlds, and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the Chiefs of the youths of the people of the Garden." Adam said:

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1. The first and third replies seem strange, to say the least. The author himself has said (while commenting on the phrase, " . . . the Satan made them both slip from it") that the order to "get down" or to "get out" may mean, "Get down from the company of the angels; or, get down from the heaven". But here he rejects the second alternative altogether! The third reply is based on القِياسُ مَعَ الفَارق an unacceptable analogy — that which overlooks the important differences between the two sides. If the Satan is governed by time and space how does it imply that Allãh too should be governed by them? Moreover, in the same commentary the author has proved on the strength of this same verse that "the Satan had visited them near that tree in the Garden. He entered the Garden . . . (and) Adam, his wife and the Satan all were removed from the Garden together." This leaves us with the second reply, which is doubtlessly without any flaw and is supported by the Qur'ãn. (tr.)

2. That is, Abu 'ṣ-Ṣalt Abdu 's-Salãm ibn Ṣãliḥ al-Harawī.

"O my Lord! who are they?" He, Mighty and Great is He said: "O Adam! they are (from) your off-springs; and they are better than you and all My creation; and if it were not (for) them, I would have not created you, nor the Garden, nor the fire, nor the heaven, nor the earth. So be careful not to look at them with envious eyes; otherwise, I will turn you out of My nearness." But he looked at them with envious eyes and entertained the hope of (attaining to) their rank. So, the Satan got the better of him, until he ate from the forbidden tree; and got the better of Ḥawwã', and she looked at Fãṭimah with envious eyes until she too, like Adam, ate from the tree. Thereupon, Allãh turned them out of His Garden, and got them down from His nearness to the earth.' " (*`Uyũnu 'l-akhbãr*)

The author says: This matter has been described in many traditions, some more detailed than this; others, more concise. In this tradition, the Imãm has confirmed that the tree was the wheat-plant, and also that it was the tree of envy. The former implies that the tree was not worthy of attention of the people of the Garden; the later indicates that it was too lofty to come within the grasp of Adam and his wife (as a tradition says that it was the tree of the knowledge of Muhammad and his progeny).

Apparently, the two interpretations are totally different from each other, and the tradition seems a problematic one. But if you ponder on the covenant referred to earlier, you will see that both meanings are complementary, and not mutually exclusive. Adam (a.s.) wanted to combine the pleasures of the Garden — a place of nearness to Allãh, where it was necessary to always keep the covenant before one's eyes, and not to let one's attention divert to anyone or anything else — with the forbidden tree — which would bring all the world's troubles in its wake; but he failed in his endeavour, was sent down to the earth because he had been heedless of the said covenant and of

its demands. It was reserved for the Prophet to combine these two seemingly apposite factors; it was he who, for the first time, harmonized this world with the next, synchronized the matter with the spirit, and brought into being a whole man.
However, Allãh again guided Adam aright, chose him for His vicegerency, and as a result of his repentance, raised him above the worldly desires and made him remember again the forgotten covenant.

"But he looked at them with envious eyes and entertained the hope of (attaining to) their rank": The second clause explains the first; Adam wanted that he too should attain to that status; it was not that he was envious (i.e., had any ill will) against them. Envy is a vice, while aspiring to raise one's status is not.

Now let us look at the following two traditions:

1. ath-Thumãli narrates from Abũ Ja'far (a.s.) that he said: "Allãh made a covenant with Adam that he should not go near the tree. But when the time came when, according to the knowledge of Allãh, he was to eat of it, he forgot (the covenant) and ate from it. And that is (the meaning of) the words of Allãh: *And certainly We had covenanted unto Adam before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination.*" (*Kamãlu 'd-dīn*)

2. al-'Ayyãshī narrated in his *at-Tafsīr* from one of the two (i.e., the fifth or the sixth) Imãms, that he was asked as to why Allãh punished Adam for his forgetfulness. He said: "He had not forgotten; and how could he forget when he had remembered it (very well) and (even) Iblīs had told him: *Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may* (not) *become of the immortals*."

The way to harmonize these seemingly conflicting traditions is clear if one applies to them the foregoing explanation.

Abu 'ṣ-Ṣalt al-Harawi said: "al-Ma'mũn gathered for `Ali ibn Mũsã ar-Riḍã (a.s.) people of various sects from

among the Muslims, the Jews, the Christians, the Magians, the Sabaeans and all other religions. Nobody stood (for religious discussion with the Imãm) but that he was forced to accept his (Imãm's) arguments and was put to silence. Then stood before him Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jahm and said to him: 'Do you believe in sinlessness of the prophets? O son of the Messenger of Allãh!' He said: 'Yes.' He (`Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jahm) said: 'Then what would you do with the words of Allãh: *and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he got astray? . . .*' Then said our master, ar-Riḍã (a.s.):

'Woe unto you! O Ali! Have fear of Allãh (in your heart) and do not ascribe indecencies to the prophets of Allãh, and do not interpret by your own opinion the Book of Allãh (Mighty and Great is He!) Verily Allãh (Mighty and Great is He!) says: . . . *but none knows its interpretation except Allãh and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge* (3:7). As for the words of Allãh, *and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he got astray,* (the fact is that) Allãh (Mighty and Great is He!) had created Adam (to be) His proof in His earth and (to be) His vicegerent in His towns; He had not created him for the Garden; and the disobedience was (done) by Adam in the Garden, and not in the earth; (and it came to pass) so that the measures of the decree of Allãh (Mighty and Great is He) might be fulfilled. So when he was sent down to the earth and was made (Allãh's) proof and vicegerent, he was protected (i.e. became sinless), as Allãh says: *Surely Allãh chose Adam and Nũḥ and the descendants of Ibrãhīm and the descendants of Imrãn above all the worlds.*' " (3:33) (*al-Amãlī,* aṣ-Ṣadũq)

The author says: The sentence, "and the disobedience was . . . in the Garden", points to what we have already mentioned that there was no religious law ordained in the Garden; and that Adam (a.s.) even before his creation, was destined to live in the earth; and, therefore, the disobedience was of an advice, and not of an ordained law. In this context,

there appears no reason why anyone should try (as someone has done) to explain away this tradition in a round-about way.

'Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Jahm said: "I was present in the court of al-Ma'mũn; and Ali ibn Mũsã was there with him. And al-Ma'mũn said to him: 'O son of the Messenger of Allãh! Is it not your belief that the prophets are sinless?' He said: 'Yes.' (al-Ma'mũn) said: 'Then what is the meaning of the words of Allãh, the High: *and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so he got astray?'* (The Imãm) said: 'Verily Allãh said to Adam: *dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat* (*you* both) *freely wherever you* (two) *wish and do not approach* (*you* two) *this tree,* (pointing to a tree) *for then you* (two) *will be of the unjust.* Allãh did not say to him:

Do not eat from this tree nor from another tree of its kind. And they did not eat from it; they ate from another (similar) tree because the Satan whispered evil suggestion to them and said: "*Your Lord has not forbidden you from this* (*i.e.* the other similar) *tree;* He has only forbidden you from approaching that one; and He has not forbidden you from that three *except that you may not both become two angels or that you may not become of the immortals.*" *And he swore to them both*: "*Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you.*" And Adam and Ḥawwã' had not seen before that anyone swearing falsely in the name of Allãh; thus he caused them to fall by deceit and they ate from that (tree) because they believed in his oath in the name of Allãh. And it all happened before Adam was made a prophet, and it was not a big sin leading one to the fire; it was only a forgiven minor (sin) that is permissible to the prophets before they begin receiving revelation. But when Allãh chose him and made him prophet he became sinless, not committing any minor or major sin. Allãh (Mighty and Great is He!) has said: *Surely Allãh chose Adam and Nũḥ and the descendants of Ibrãhīm and the descendants of 'Imrãn above all the worlds . . .'* " (*`Uyunu*

'l-akhbãr)

The **author says:** aṣ-Ṣadũq (may Allãh have mercy on him!) after narrating the tradition in full, has commented as follows:

"Strange that `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jahm, in spite of his open hostility towards, and enmity and hatred of, *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*), should narrate this tradition."

This comment only looks at the belief of the sinlessness of the prophets which this tradition purportedly proves; but aṣ-Ṣadũq (may Allãh have mercy on him!) did not look deep into its implications. The reported reply is not in accord with the well-known belief of the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt,* that all the prophets were fully protected from all major and minor sins before as well as after getting the prophethood.

Moreover, the reply presumes that the verse does not mean what it apparently says. According to this tradition, the verse, "Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not both become two angels . . .", should be read as follows: "Your Lord has not forbidden you from this (i.e. the other similar) tree; He has only forbidden you from approaching that one; and He has not forbidden you from that tree except that you may not both become two angels . . ." Such deletions are against the norms of eloquence. The quoted speech of the Satan clearly shows that he was instigating them to eat from the very tree that was forbidden, holding out to them the hope of becoming angels or immortals: "*Your Lord has not forbidden you from this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may* (not) *become of the immortals.*" *"O Adam! shall I guide you to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which decays not?"* The narrator, that is, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Jahm, had himself been given the correct and complete answer in the court of al-Ma'mũn, as the preceding tradition shows; therefore, there is something wrong in this narration of his, although some parts may be somehow interpreted correctly.

aṣ-Ṣadũq has narrated (through his chain) from al-Bãqir (a.s.), through his forefathers, from 'Ali (a.s.) that the Messenger of Allãh (s.a.w.a.) said: "Adam and Ḥawwã' stayed in the Garden, (till they were sent out of it) for seven hours according to the (counting of the) days of the world, until Allãh sent them down on the same day."

`Abdullah ibn Sinãn said: "Abu `Abdillãh (a.s.) was asked — and I was present there: 'How long did Adam and his wife stay in the Garden until their mistake removed them from it?' He said: 'Verily Allãh breathed His spirit into Adam after the mid-day on Friday; then created his wife from his lowest rib; then He made His angels prostrate before him and placed him in His Garden the same day. And by God! he did not stay therein but six hours of the same day until he disobeyed Allãh. Thereupon, Allãh removed them both from it after the sunset, and they were put into the courtyard of the Garden till the morning; then their nakedness became manifest to them; and their Lord called out to them: "*Did I not forbid you both from that tree?*" Adam felt ashamed and bowed (his head) and said: "*Our Lord ! We have been unjust to ourselves and we confess our sins; therefore, forgive us* (our sins)." Allãh said to them: "*Get down you both from My heavens to the earth; because no sinner shall remain in My nearness — neither in My Garden nor in My heavens.*" ' " (*at-Tafsīr,* al-`Ayyãshī)

The author says: The tradition gives a new detail, that Adam and Ḥawwã' were removed first from the Garden to its courtyard and then from the courtyard to the earth. There are some indications in the Qur'ãn to support this information:

First: They were twice told to "get down" (vide vs. 2:36 and 2:38). It was a creative, and not a legislative, order, and a creative order takes effect the instant it is given.

If the first order told them to get down to the earth, there was no question of their not getting down to the earth at once;

and, therefore, the second order would be superfluous. But in the light of this tradition the two commands would be perfectly in order.

Second: As mentioned in the commentary, this idea may be inferred from the changed verbs and pronouns of the verses. Allãh describes in these words his talk with Adam when he was being placed in the Garden: *And We said*: "*O Adam! dwell you and your wife in the Garden . . . and do not approach* (*you* two) *this tree ..."* But after they had eaten from the tree, *their Lord called out to them*: "*Did I not forbid you both from that tree?*" The verb, "We said" of the former has been changed to "called out to them" in the latter; as the demonstrative pronoun, "this tree" (showing nearness) was replaced by "that tree" (showing distance). These changes show that Adam had been removed, by the time of the second address, from his original place of nearness in the Garden to a distant place — which the tradition describes as the courtyard. But this tradition says that Ḥawwã' was created from the lowest rib of Adam; it is a Biblical story which has been totally rejected by the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt,* (as will be seen from the traditions which will be quoted under the verses of the creation of Adam). This tradition, therefore, is unacceptable unless this expression is taken to mean that Ḥawwã' was created from the clay left over from the creation of Adam and which was lying near his lowest rib.

Whether he stayed in the Garden for six hours (as this tradition says) or seven (as the former says) is not very important, because such things are mere approximation.

It is reported from the fifth or the sixth Imãm (peace be on them both) that he said about the verse, *then Adam received* (some) *words from his Lord,* that (the words were as follows): "There is no god except Thee; Glory be to Thee, O Allãh! and praise! I have committed evil and been unjust to myself; therefore, forgive me (my sin) and Thou art the best of the forgivers. There is no god except Thee; Glory be to Thee, O

Allãh! and praise! I have done wrong and been unjust to myself; therefore, have mercy on me, and Thou art the best of the forgivers. There is no god except Thee; Glory to Thee, O Allãh! and praise! I have committed evil and been unjust to myself; therefore, have mercy on me, and Thou art the best of those who have mercy. There is no god except Thee; Glory be to Thee, O Allãh! and praise! I have done wrong and been unjust to myself; therefore, forgive me (my sin) and turn to me (with mercy); surely Thou, Thou alone, art oft-returning (with mercy), the Merciful." (*al-Kãfī*)

The author says: This theme has been narrated also by aṣ-Ṣadũq, al-`Ayyãshi, al-Qummi and others; nearly the same thing has been narrated through the Sunni chains; and it may possibly be inferred from the apparent meaning, of the verses.

al-Kulayni has written in *al-Kãfī*: "And another tradition says in respect of this verse: (Adam) had asked from (Allãh) by the right of Muhammad and Ali and Fãṭimah and al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn."

The author says: This explanation too has been narrated by aṣ-Ṣadũq, al-`Ayyãshi, al-Qummi and others. A nearly similar tradition has been narrated through the Sunni chains. It is reported in *ad-Durru 'l-manthur* that the Prophet said: "When Adam committed the sin that he committed, he raised his head towards the heaven and said: 'I beseech Thee, by the right of Muhammad, to forgive me.' Allãh revealed to him (i.e., asked him through revelation): 'And who is Muhammad?' He said: 'Blessed is Thy name! When Thou created me, I raised my head towards Thy Throne and saw written therein: There is no god except Allãh; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allãh. Thus I knew that no one could be more honoured in Thy presence than him whose name Thou hadst placed with Thy name.' Thereupon, Allãh revealed to him: 'O Adam! Verily he is the last of the prophets, from thy descendants; and if it

were not for him, I would have not created thee.' "

The author says: Although these traditions seem not to be in accord with the apparent meaning of the verse, on deeper consideration this explanation does not look so far-fetched. The sentence, "Then Adam received (some) words,-from his Lord", shows that he was taught those words by the Lord, and that he had got that knowledge before his repentance. Also, it is known that Allãh had taught him all the names. Allãh told the angels that He was going to make in the earth a vicegerent; *they said*: "*Wilt Thou place in it such as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, while we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness? He said*: "*Surely I know what you do not know". And He taught Adam the names, all of them.* There must have been something in those names to wipe out every injustice, to erase every sin and to cure every spiritual and moral disease; otherwise, the objection of the angels could not be answered — Allãh did not say a single word to refute the angels' assertion; all He did was to teach Adam all the names. It means that those names could cure all the ills of humanity; the angels understood it and surrendered to the know-ledge and wisdom of Allãh. We have earlier explained that those names were sublime creations, hidden from the heavens and the earth; they were intermediaries to convey the grace and bounties of Allãh to His creation; and no creature would be able to attain to its perfection without their assistance. At this stage, we may refer to some traditions which say that Adam saw the figures of Muhammad and his *Ahlu 'l-bayt,* and also their light at the time he was taught the names; and the ones which mention that he saw them when Allãh took out his offspring from his back; and the others which describe his seeing them in the Garden.

However, Allãh has not identified those words, and has used it as a common noun, “(some) words"; nevertheless, the Qur'ãn has clearly used the expression, “word”, for an individual being, as for example, in the verse 3:45: . . . *Allãh gives you good news of a word from Him whose name is the Messiah, ‘Isã son of Maryam* . . .

Some exegetes have written that the “words”, mentioned in this verse, refer to the plea of Adam and his wife reported in Chapter 7: *They said*: “*Our Lord! We have been unjust to our-selves, and if Thou forgive us not, and have* (not) *mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers*.”

But the sequence of events does not support this view. The repentance of Adam, according to the narrative of Chapter 2, had occurred after his coming to the earth. The verse (2:37) describing the repentance comes after the verse (2:36) that

mentions his descent to the earth.[1] But they had uttered that plea while they were still in the Garden, before coming down to the earth. The plea is given in verse 7:23; and the order to “get down” comes after that in verse 7:24. Apparently, this plea was in response to their admonition by Allãh: “*Did I not forbid you both from that tree* . . .?”; they wanted to declare their servitude and to surrender themselves to Allãh; acknowledging that all the authority was in the hands of Allãh and He might do what He pleased; He was their Lord, and they had put themselves in danger of loss by being unjust to themselves.

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: “Verily, Mũsã asked his Lord to let him meet Adam; and he was joined with him (i.e., Adam). Mũsã said to him: ‘O father! Did Allãh not create you with His hand, and breathe into you of His spirit; and make the angels prostrate before you, and order you not to eat of the

tree? Then why did you disobey Him?' (Adam) said: 'O Mũsã! How long before my creation did you find my mistake (mentioned) in the Torah?' He said: 'Thirty thousand years before.' (Adam) said: 'That is it.' " aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "Thus refuted Adam the argument of Mũsã." (*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummi)

The author says: aṣ-Ṣuyũṭi has narrated in *ad-Durru 'l-manthũr* approximately similar traditions, through various chains, from the Prophet.

al-Bãqir (a.s.) said: "By God, Allãh had surely created Adam for the world, and He gave him place in the Garden, in order that he might disobey Him and thus He might return him to that for which He had created him." (*'Ilalu 'sh-sharã'i'*)

The author says: A tradition of the same theme, narrated by al-`Ayyãshi from aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.), concerning an angel friend of Adam, has been quoted earlier.

A Syrian asked 'Ali (a.s.) as to which valley in the earth was the most honoured. He (a.s.) said: "The valley called Sarandib wherein Adam descended from the heaven." (*al-Iḥtijãj*)

The author says: In contrast to it, there are numerous traditions showing that he had descended at Mecca (and some of them have been quoted above). May be, he first came down to Sarandib and then got down to Mecca.

It has been reported by aṭ-Ṭabarãnī, Abu 'sh-Shaykh (in his *al- 'Aẓamah*) and Ibn Marduwayh, from Abu Dharr, that he said: "I said: 'O Messenger of Allãh! What do you say, was Adam a prophet?' He said: 'Yes. He was a prophet (and) an

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1. It is not in accord with the author's earlier assertion that the verse 2:36 describes Adam's removal from the earlier-held place of honour to the courtyard of the Garden; after which he learned "some words" from Allãh and repented (2:37); and it was later that he was sent down from the courtyard to the Garden (2:38). (tr.)

apostle; Allãh talked to him before; He had told him: "O Adam! dwell you and your wife in the Garden." ' "

The author says: The Sunnis have narrated almost similar traditions through various chains.

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يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا
بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ ـ ٤٠. وَآمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَافِرٍ بِهِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُونِ ـ ٤١. وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ
وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ـ ٤٢. وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَآتُوا
الزَّكٰوةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ ـ ٤٣. أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ
وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ـ ٤٤.

O children of Israel! Remember My bounties which I bestowed on you, and be faithful to (*your*) *covenant with Me, I will fulfil* (My) *covenant with you; and of Me, Me alone, should you be afraid* (40). *And believe in what I have sent down verifying that which is with you, and be not the first to deny it, neither take a mean price in exchange for My signs; and Me, Me alone, should you fear* (41). *And do not mix up the truth with the falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know* (*it*) (42). *And keep up prayer and pay the zakãt and bow down with those who bow down* (43). *What! do you enjoin men to be good and forget your own selves while you read the Book? Have you then no sense?* (44)

GENERAL COMMENT

Now begins the rebuking of the Jews that continues for more than a hundred verses. Allãh reminds them of the bounties bestowed, of the honours given; contrasting it with their ingratitude and disobedience; showing how at every juncture they paid the favours of Allãh with disregard of their covenant, open rebellion against divine commands and even with polytheism. The series reminds them of twelve events of their history — like rescuing them from Pharaoh and his people by parting the river, drowning of Pharaoh and his army, the appointed rendezvous at the mount Sinã'i, the Jews' starting calf-worship in Mũsã's absence, and M a a s order to them to kill themselves, their demand from M ũ s ã to show their Lord to them face to face, their death by lightning and then their arising from dead etc. — all of which shows how they were chosen to receive the especial favours of Allãh. But their ingratitude runs parallel to it. They repeatedly broke the covenants made with Allãh, committed capital sins, heinous crimes and shameful deeds; more despicable was their spiritual poverty and moral bankruptcy — in open defiance to their book and total disregard to the reason. It was all because their hearts were hardened, their souls lost and their endeavours worthless.

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: . . . *and be faithful to* (your) *covenant with Me*: "*al-'Ahd*" (الـعَـهْـدُ = covenant) literally means guarding and maintenance. By association it has come to mean covenant, oath, testament, will, encounter, house, etc.

QUR'ÃN: . . . *and of Me,. . . should you be afraid:* , "*ar-Rahbah*" (اَلرَّهْبَـةُ = fear) is opposite of *ar-Raghbah* (اَلرَّغْبَـةُ = desire).

QUR'ÃN : . . . *and be not the first to deny it*: That is, first among the people of the book, or first among your own people. This firstness is not all-inclusive, because the disbelievers of Mecca had rejected the Message before the Jews.

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وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ ــ ٤٥ . الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ــ ٤٦ .

And seek assistance through patience and prayer; and most surely it is a hard thing, except for the humble ones (45)*, who know that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return to Him* (46).

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN : *And seek assistance through patience and prayer*: Man seeks assistance in such affairs and tasks as he cannot manage alone, and in hardships and difficulties which he cannot overcome himself. In reality there is no helper except Allãh. Man can, therefore, manage all his affairs and overcome all his difficulties by courage and steadfastness (i.e. by patience) and by looking towards Allãh (i.e. by prayer). These two factors are the best way to get assistance: patience makes even the great misfortunes look trivial, and putting all his confidence in Allãh awakens the spirit of faith; and thus man

comes to realize that the cause which he is relying upon can never fail to produce the desired effect.

QUR'ÃN: *and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones*: The pronoun "it" refers to the "prayer". It is difficult to relate it to "seeking the assistance", because it will then cover patience too, and the word "the humble ones" will not look appropriate — humbleness does not fit very much with patience. The word used here for humbleness is "*khushũ'* " (اَلْخُشُوْعُ); "*khuḍũ'* "(اَلْخُضُوْعُ) too has the same meaning but with one difference: while the latter shows itself in the limbs of the body, the former refers to the inner feeling.

QUR'ÃN: *who know that they shall meet their Lord . . .*:The word used in this verse for "knowing" is "*yaḍunnũn*" (يَظُنُّونَ) it literally means "they think". But the context, that is, the belief in the hereafter, demands a firm conviction that would leave no room for any doubt or supposition. Allãh says: *and they are sure of the hereafter* (2:4). Or, may be, Allãh, by using this word, makes us realize that even an elementary idea of the hereafter is sufficient to create in a man humility and humbleness before his Lord. Many a knowledge comes to man in stages: (1) first he becomes aware of an idea; (2) then he has some doubts about its correctness; (3) then he becomes inclined to accept it; (4) then gradually the possibility of his accepting the opposite view vanishes completely and he becomes firmly convinced of the truth of that idea — and this firm conviction is called knowledge. If such a knowledge is concerned with some frightening affair, then his worry and disquiet will begin as soon as he reaches the third stage when he is only inclined to accept it — is only "thinking" that probably it may be true. This Qur'ãnic expression, in other words, says that man, for showing humbleness before Allãh, needs only to be aware of the idea that there is a Lord Whom he may return to after his death. In this context only a strong supposition should be enough to make him desist from disobeying his Lord; it would not be necessary, for

this purpose, to reach the stage of firm knowledge. From this point of view, the verse looks almost similar to the verse: . . . *therefore, whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join any one in the worship of his Lord* (18:110).

The above discourse is based on the assumption that the words, "they shall meet their Lord . . ." refer to the Day of Resurrection. But if they are interpreted in another way (as we shall describe in Chapter 7), there should be no difficulty at all in its explanation.

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "Whenever `Ali (a.s.) faced a difficulty, he used to stand up for the prayer and then recite this verse: *and seek assistance through patience and prayer.*" (*al-Kãfī*)

The same Imãm said about this verse: "The patience means fasting." Also he said: "When a man is confronted by a hard misfortune, he should fast. Surely Allãh says: *and seek assistance through patience,* that is, fast." (*ibid.*)

The author says: al-`Ayyãshi too has narrated the theme of these two traditions in his *at-Tafsīr.* Interpretation of "patience" as fast is based on the "flow" of the Qur'ãn.

Abu 'l-Ḥasan (a.s.) said about this verse: "The patience means fast; when a man is visited by a hardship or misfortune, he should fast; surely Allãh says: *And seek assistance through patience and prayer; and most surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones.* And the humble one is he who shows humility in his prayer, turning all his attention to it; and it means the Messenger of Allãh (s. a. w. a.) and the Leader of the faithful (a.s.)." (al-`Ayyãshi)

The author says: The Imãm has inferred from this verse the desirability of fasting and praying when one is facing any hardship or turmoil; and likewise, the desirability of seeking the divine help through the medium of the Prophet and `Ali (a.s.) at that time. In this way, the tradition interprets the fast and the prayer as the Prophet and `Ali (a.s.) .

`Ali (a.s.) said about the verse, *who know that they shall meet their Lord . .* Allãh says that they are sure that they would be resurrected. And the supposition *az-zann* (الضَّنُّ) here means certainty. (*ibid.*)

The author says: aṣ-Ṣadũq also has narrated this tradition.

al Bãqir (a.s.) said that this verse was revealed about All, `Uthman ibn Maz`un, `Ammar ibn Yasir and (some of) their friends. (*al-Mandqib,* Ibn Shahrashub)

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يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي
فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ـــ ٤٧ . وَاتَّقُوا يَوْماً لاَ تَجْزِى نَفْسٌ عَنْ
نَفْسٍ شَيْئاً وَلاَ يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلاَ يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلاَ هُمْ
يُنْصَرُونَ ـــ ٤٨ .

O Children of Israel! call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nation (47). *And be on your guard against the day when one soul shall not avail another in the least; neither shall intercession on its behalf be accepted, nor shall any compensation be taken from it, nor shall they be helped* (48).

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *And be on your guard against the day when one soul shall not avail another in the least*: The temporal power and authority, with all its various systems and varying conditions, is based on a necessity of life — the only justification of this institution is that it fulfils this need in the framework of the prevailing factors of the society. It some times exchanges a commodity for another, gives up a benefit

for another, substitutes an order with another — without any hard and fast criterion to regulate such dispensations. The same phenomenon is observed in their judiciary. Logically, a crime must be recompensed with punishment. Yet some times the judge, because of some extraneous reasons, decides not to punish the criminal. Some times the criminal rouses in the judge an overwhelming feeling of pity by his passionate appeal for mercy. Or he wins him over by bribe which induces him to deliver an unjust judgement. Or an influential man intercedes with the judge on behalf of the said criminal and the judge cannot ignore that intercession. Or, the said criminal becomes a state witness leading to the conviction of even greater criminals, and is himself, thus, released without any punishment. Or his tribe or colleagues get him freed from the clutches of the authorities. Whatever the cause may be, it is a well-established custom in the worldly governments and human societies to let the wrong-doers go free at times.

The ancient tribes and the idol-worshippers believed that the life hereafter was an extension of this one; that the customs of this world were valid for that one too, and that the next world was permeated by the same actions and reactions which prevailed in this one. Thus they offered sacrifices and offerings to their deities seeking forgiveness for their sins or assistance in their needs; the offerings were supposed to intercede on their behalf. Some times a sin was expiated or help was sought by offering even a human sacrifice. They carried this idea of continuation of the life so far as to bury with a man all types of necessities of life, not forgetting his ornaments and arms, in order that he might use them on his onward journey; some times even his concubines and soldiers were buried alive with him to keep him company. You may see a lot of such finds in archaeological museums around the world. Some such ideas have persisted even among the Muslims — with all their diverse cultures and languages, albeit in modified forms.

The Qur'ãn has rejected all such superstitious beliefs and

baseless ideas in no uncertain terms:
. . . and the command on that day shall be entirely Allãh's (82:19).
. . . and they see the chastisement and their ties are cut asunder (2:166).
And certainly you have come to Us alone as We created you at first, and you have left behind your backs the things which We gave you, and We do not see with you your intercessors about whom you asserted that they were (Allãh's) *associates in respect to you; certainly the ties between you are now cut off and what you asserted is gone from you* (6:94).
There shall every soul become acquainted with what is sent before, and they shall be brought back to Allãh, their true Master and what they did fabricate shall escape from them (10:30).

There are many similar verses; and they show that the life hereafter is cut off from the natural causes which govern this life, and is quite separate from material connections. Once this principle is understood all the above-mentioned myths would automatically be cleared away. But the Qur'ãn is not content with this general declaration; it refutes each and every myth and superstition described above:

> *And be on your guard against the day when one soul shall not avail another in the least; neither shall intercession on its behalf be accepted, nor shall any compensation be taken from it, nor shall they be helped* (12:48).
> *. . . before the day comes in which there is no bargaining, neither any friendship nor intercession* (2:254).
> *The day on which a friend shall not avail* (his) *friend aught . . .* (44:41).
> *. . . there shall be no saviour for you from Allãh . . .* (40:33).
> *What is the matter with you that you do not help each*

other? Nay! on this day they are submissive (37:25-26).
And they worship beside Allãh what can neither harm them nor profit them, and they say: "*These are our intercessors with Allãh.*" *Say*: "*Do you* (presume to) *inform Allãh of what He knows not in the heavens and the earth?" Glory be to Him, and supremely exalted is He above what they set up with Him.* (10: 18) .
. . . the unjust shall not have any friend nor any intercessors who should be obeyed (40:18).

So we have no intercessors, nor a true-friend (26:100-101).

There are many other verses of the same theme, all rejecting the intercession on the Day of Resurrection.

On the other hand, the Qur'ãn does not totally reject the intercession; rather it confirms it to a certain extent. For example, it says:

Allãh is He Who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six periods and He is firmly established on the throne; you have not besides Him any guardian or any intercessors; will you not then mind? (32:4)
. . . there is no guardian for them, nor any intercessor besides Him (6:51) .
Say: *"Allãh's is the intercession altogether"* (39:44).
. . . whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them (2:255).
Surely your Lord is Allãh, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods; and He is firmly established on the throne, regulating the affair; there is no intercessor except after His permission (10:3).
And they say; "The Beneficent God had taken to Himself a son." Glory be to Him! Nay! they are honoured servants; they do not precede Him in speech and (only)

according to His commandment do they act. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for whom He approves, and for fear of Him they tremble (21:26-28).

And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for intercession, but he who bears witness of the truth, and they know (him) (43:86).

They shall have no authority for intercession, save he who has made a covenant with the Beneficent God (19:87). *On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent God allows and whose word He is pleased with. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they do not comprehend Him in knowledge* (20:109-110)

And intercession will not avail aught with Him save of him whom He permits (34:23).

And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose inter-cession does not avail at all except after Allãh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses (53:26) .

Some of these verses (like the first three) say that intercession is reserved for Allãh, while the rest declare that others too may intercede with Allãh's permission. In any case, all of them confirm the intercession *per se.* How are these verses related to the preceding ones which totally reject intercession? It is exactly the same relation that exists between the verses that say that the knowledge of unseen is reserved to Allãh and those which declare that others too may have that knowledge with the permission of Allãh. As Allãh says:

Say: "*No one in the heaven and the earth knows the unseen but Allãh"* (27:65).

And with Him are the keys of the unseen, does not know it any except He (6:59).

The Knower of the unseen! so He does not reveal His secrets to any, except to him whom He chooses of an

apostle (72:27).

The same is the case with various verses on the subjects of creating, sustaining, giving death, causity, command, authority and similar things. Some verses reserve them for Allãh, while some say that others too may do these things. It is a well-known style of the Qur'ãn: first it rejects the idea that anyone other than Allãh has any virtue or perfection; thereafter it confirms the same virtue or perfection for others depending on the permission and pleasure of Allãh. When read together, the verses show that nobody has any virtue by his own power and right; whatever excellence there may be, he has got it because Allãh has given it to him. Allãh puts much emphasis to this fact; He attaches the proviso of His will even for those things which are firmly decreed by Him. For example: *So as to those who are unhappy, they shall be in the fire; for them shall be sighing and groaning in it; abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; surely your Lord is the* (mighty) *doer of what He intends. And as to those who are made happy, they shall be in the garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; a gift which shall never be cut off* (11:106-108). Note that abiding for ever is made de-pendent on the pleasure of Allãh, even in case of the garden, although it is a gift which shall never be cut off. It emphasizes the fact that even when Allãh firmly decrees a thing, it does not pass out of His control or authority; *surely your Lord is* (mighty) *doer of what He intends* (11:107). When Allãh gives a thing, it does not go out of His total possession. When He denies some thing to someone, it is not done to protect Himself against any need or poverty!

In short, the verses that reject intercession — albeit talking about the Day of Resurrection — do so in the context of inter-cession independent of Allãh's authority; while the ones proving it, prove it basically for Allãh and then, depending on His pleasure, for others.

Thus the intercession is proved for other than Allãh with His permission.

Now we should see what is the meaning of intercession? Who may intercede? On behalf of whom? And when? How is it related to the divine forgiveness?

1. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF INTERCESSION?

"*ash-Shafã'ah*" (اَلشَّفَاعَةُ = intercession) is derived from "*ash-shaf'* "(اَلشَّفْعُ) which means "even" as opposed to odd — the interceder adds his own recommendation to the plea of the petitioner; in this way the number of pleaders becomes even, and the weak plea of the petitioner is strengthened by the prestige of the intercessor. We are accustomed in our social and communal life to seek others' intercession and help for fulfilling our needs. We resort to it to get an advantage or to ward off a disadvantage. Here we are not talking about an advantage or a disadvantage, a benefit or a harm that is caused by natural causes, like hunger and thirst, heat or cold, illness or health; because in such cases we get what we want through its natural remedies, like eating and drinking, wearing clothes, getting treatment and so on. What we are talking here about is the benefit and harm, punishment and reward resulting from the social laws made by civil authorities. Rising from the very relationship of mastership-and-servitude — and for that matter, between every ruler and ruled — there are some commandments, orders and prohibitions; one who follows and obeys them is praised and rewarded, and the one who disobeys is condemned and punished; that reward or punishment may be either material or spiritual. When a master orders his servant to do or not to do a thing, and the servant obeys him he gets its reward; and if he disobeys he is punished. Whenever a rule is made, the punishment for its infringement is laid down too. This is the foundation which all the authorities are built upon.

When a man wants to get a material or spiritual benefit but is not suitably qualified for it; or when he desires to ward off a harm which is coming to him because of his disobedience, but has no shield to protect himself, then comes the time for intercession.

In other words, when he wants to get a reward without doing his task, or to save himself from punishment without per-forming his duty, then he looks for someone to intercede on his behalf. But intercession is effective only if the person for whom one intercedes is otherwise qualified to get the reward and has already established a relationship with the authority. If an ignorant person desires appointment to a prestigious academic post, no intercession can do him any good; nor can it avail in case of a rebellious traitor who shows no remorse for his misdeeds and does not submit to the lawful authorities. It clearly shows that intercession works as a supplement to the cause; it is not an independent cause.

The effect of an intercessor's words depends on one or the other factor which may have some influence upon the concerned authority; in other words, intercession must have a solid ground to stand upon. The intercessor endeavours to find a way to the heart of the authority concerned, in order that the said authority may give the reward to, or waive the punishment of, the person who is the subject of intercession. An intercessor does not ask the master to nullify his mastership or to release the servant from his servitude; nor does he plead with him to refrain from laying down rules and regulations for his servants or to abrogate his commandments (either generally or especially in that one case), in order to save the wrong-doer from the due consequences; nor does he ask him to discard the canon of reward and punishment, (either generally or in that particular case). In short, intercession can interfere with neither the institution of mastership and servantship nor the master's authority to lay down the rules; nor can it effect the system of reward and punishment. These three factors are beyond the

jurisdiction of intercession.

What an intercessor does is this: He accepts the inviolability of the above-mentioned three aspects. Then he looks at one or more of the following factors and builds his intercession on that basis:

a. He appeals to such attributes of the master as give rise to forgiveness, e.g., his nobility, magnanimity and generosity.

b. He draws attention to such characteristics of the servant as justify mercy and pardon, e.g., his wretchedness, poverty, low status and misery.

c. He puts at stake his own prestige and honour in the eyes of the master.

Thus, the import of intercession is like this: I cannot and do not say that you should forget your mastership over your servant or abrogate your commandment or nullify the system of reward and punishment. What I ask of you is to forgive this defaulting servant of yours because you are magnanimous and generous, and because no harm would come to you if you forgive his sins; and/or because your servant is a wretched creature of low status and steeped in misery; and it is befitting of a master like you to ignore the faults of a slave like him; and/or because you have bestowed on me a high prestige, and I implore you to forgive and pardon him in honour of my intercession.

The intercessor, in this way, bestows precedence on the factors of forgiveness and pardon over those of legislation and recompense. He removes the case from the latter's jurisdiction putting it under former's influence. As a result of this shift, the consequences of legislation (reward and punishment) do not remain applicable. The effect of intercession is, therefore, based on shifting the case from the jurisdiction of reward and punishment to that of pardon and forgiveness; it is not a confrontation between one cause (divine legislation) and the other (intercession).

By now it should have been clear that intercession too is one of the causes; it is the intermediate cause that connects a

distant cause to its desired effect.

Allãh is the ultimate Cause. This causality shows itself in two ways:

First: In creation: Every cause begins from Him and ends up to Him; He is the first and the final Cause. He is the real Creator and Originator. All other causes are mere channels to carry His boundless mercy and limitless bounty to His creatures.

Second: In legislation: He, in His mercy, established a con-tact with His creatures; He laid down the religion, sent down His commandments, and prescribed suitable reward and appropriate punishment for His obedient and disobedient servants; He sent prophets and apostles to bring us good tidings and to warn us of the consequences of transgression. The prophets and apostles conveyed to us His message in the best possible way. Thus His proof over us was complete: *and the word of your Lord has been accomplished with truth and justice, there is none to change His words. . .* (6:115).

Both aspects of causality of Allãh may be, and in fact are, related to intercession.

1. Intercession in creation: Quite obviously the intermediary causes of creation are the conduits that bring the divine mercy, life, sustenance and other bounties to the creatures; and as such they are intercessors between the Creator and the created. Some Qur'ãnic verses too are based on this very theme: *whatever, is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission* (2:255); *Surely your Lord is Allãh, who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is firmly established on throne, regulating the affair; there is no intercessor except after His permission* (10:3).

Intercession in the sphere of creation is only the intermediation of causes between the Creator and the created thing and effect, in bringing it into being and regulating its affairs.

2. Intercession in legislation: Intercession, as analysed earlier, is effective in this sphere too. It is in this context that Allãh says: *On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent God allows and whose word He is pleased with* (20:109); *And intercession will not avail aught with Him save of him whom He permits* (34:23); *And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allãh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses* (53:26); *. . . and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves. . .* (21:28); *And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for intercession, but he who bears witness of the truth and they know* (him) (43:86). These verses clearly affirm intercessory role for various servants of Allãh — both men and angels — with divine permission and pleasure. It means that Allãh has given them some power and authority in this matter, and to Him belongs all the kingdom and all the affairs. Those intercessors may appeal to Allãh's mercy, forgiveness and other relevant attributes to cover and protect a servant who other-wise would have deserved punishment because of his sins and transgressions. That intercession would transfer his case from the general law of recompense to the special domain of grace and mercy. (It has already been explained that the effect of inter-cession is based on shifting a case from the former's to the latter's jurisdiction; it is not a confrontation between one law and the other.) Allãh clearly says: *. . . so these are they of whom Allãh changes the evil deeds to good ones* (25:70). Allãh has the power to change one type of deed into other, in the same way as He may render an act null and void. He says: *And We will proceed to what they have done of deeds, so We shall render them as scattered floating dust* (25:23); *. . . so He rendered their deeds null* (47:9); *If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden, We will expiate from you your* (small) *sins* (4:31); *Surely Allãh does not forgive that any thing should be associated with Him, and forgives what is*

besides that to whomsoever He pleases (4:48). The last quoted verse is certainly about the cases other than true belief and repentance, because with belief and repentance even polytheism is forgiven, like any other sin. Also Allãh may nurture a small deed to make it greater than the original: *These shall be granted their reward twice* (28:54); *Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it* (6:160). Likewise, He may treat a non-existent deed as existing: *And* (as for) *those who believe and their offspring follow them in faith, We will unite with them their off-spring and We will not diminish to them aught of their work; every man is responsible for what he has done* (52:21).

To make a long story short, Allãh does what He please, and decrees as He wills. Of course, He does so pursuant to His servants' interest, and in accordance with an intermediary cause — and intercession of the intercessors (e.g., the prophets, the friends of Allãh and those who are nearer to Him) is one of those causes, and certainly no rashness or injustice is entailed therein.

It should have been clear by now that intercession, in its true sense, belongs to Allãh only; all His attributes are intermediaries between Him and His creatures and are the channels through which His grace, mercy and decrees pass to the creatures; He is the real and all-encompassing intercessor: *Say: "Allãh's is the intercession altogether"* (39:44); . . . *you have not besides Him any guardian or any intercessor* (32:4); . . . *there is no guardian for them nor any intercessor besides Him* (6:51). The intercessors, other than Allãh, get that right by His permission, by His authority.

In short, intercession with Him is a confirmed reality — in cases where it does not go against the divine glory and honour.

2. THE OBJECTIONS AGAINST INTERCESSION

Intercession, as explained above, is a confirmed reality — not in every case but in approved ones. The Qur'ãn and the traditions do not prove more than this. A little meditation on the meaning

of intercession is enough to lead to this conclusion. Intercession is mediation in causality and effectiveness. Obviously causality cannot be limitless and unconditional. No cause can be a cause of every effect, nor can an effect be governed by every cause — otherwise it would render the system of cause and effect null and void. Those who do not believe in intercession have fallen in this very trap — they thought that we affirm the intercession in its totality without any condition or limit. All their objections emanates from this very misunderstanding:

First Objection: Allãh has threatened to punish the wrong-doer; now supposedly He waives the punishment on the Day of Judgement. The question is whether this waiver is justice or in-justice. If it is justice, then the original promise of punishment would be injustice, quite unworthy of divine majesty; and if it is injustice, then the intercession of the prophets, for example, would be a plea for injustice, and it is a folly that should not be attributed to the prophets.

Reply — First: What will they say about those orders that are given only to test the loyalty of a servant and are changed at the last moment, like the order to Ibrãhīm to kill Ismã'īl? Surely its waiver too like the original order was based on justice. Such orders are given only to test the hidden quality of the servant concerned. Likewise, it may be said that salvation is written for all the believers. The laws of the *shari`ah* were ordained — with punishments prescribed for transgressors — in order that the disbelievers should perish because of their disbelief. As for the obedient believers their rank would be enhanced by their good deeds. And as for the disobedient believers, they would be rescued by intercession: that intercession might be effective either totally or partially; in later case, they would have to suffer some of the punishments in al-Barzakh or on the Day of Judgement itself and then they would get deliverance.

Thus the original law with the prescribed punishment for

the defaulters is nothing but justice, and, the subsequent waiver of that punishment too is nothing but justice.

Second: The waiver of the prescribed punishment as a result of intercession could be compared with the previous order — in being based on justice or injustice — only if that waiver were a contradiction of the previous order. But we have explained that it is not so. Intercession is not a contradiction of, or confrontation between one cause (divine legislation) and the other (intercession); it is in fact shifting his case from one jurisdiction (reward and punishment) to the other (mercy and forgiveness).

Second Objection: It is the established practice of Allãh, that His actions are always safe from contradiction and conflict. Whatever He decrees and orders, without any exception, runs on an established pattern. And this is the foundation which the system of cause and effect has been built upon. Allãh says: *This is a straight path with Me*, *Surely, as regards My servants, thou hast no authority over them except those who follow thee of the deviators. And surely Hell is the promised place of them all* (15:41- 43); *And* (know) *that this is My path, the straight one, therefore, follow it, and follow not* (other) *ways, for they will scatter you away from His way* (6:153); *For you shall not find any alteration in the course of Allãh; and you shall not find any change in the course of Allãh* (35:43). And intercession, if effective, would certainly create conflict and contradiction in the actions of Allãh: If intercession caused waiver of punishment from all the sinners, of all their sins, then it would defeat the very purpose of the *shari`ah* and would turn the whole system into a joke. And if only some of the sinners, or only some of their sins were forgiven, then there would occur contradiction in divine actions and change and alteration in Allãh's established course. Certainly, all the sinners are transgressors and every sin is disobedience of divine command. Therefore, forgiving only

some of them or only some of their sins, because of intercession, would be impossible.

Intercession is used in this life of ours, where people are influenced by their desires or social connections. It cannot work in the affairs of the *shari`ah* nor can it influence the divine judgement in any way.

Reply: No one doubts that the path of Allãh is straight and His course without any change or conflict. But it should not be forgotten that this one and unchanged course is based on all His relevant attributes, not on only one or two of them. Allãh is the One Who bestows on every creature diverse things like life, death, sustenance, bounty and so on. These are the decrees that are contradictory or unrelated to each other; they do not have the same connection with the issuing authority i.e. God. Otherwise the relationship of cause and effect would become null and void. For example, Allãh does not restore a sick man to health by virtue of His death-giving power; rather He does so because He is Merciful, Benevolent, Giver of health and Bestower of bounties. Likewise, He does not destroy an arrogant tyrant by His mercy and beneficence, but because He is the Avenger, the Omnipotent and the Subduer. The Qur'ãn is the best witness of this fact: Whenever it ascribes an event or affair to Him, it invariably always mentions the appropriate attribute by which that affair or event was decreed and managed.

You may say that every affair and every thing is decreed by Allãh because of its underlying benefit and good. And He does whatever He does by His all relevant attributes, and not by only one or some of them. There is always action and reaction between benefits and good of various courses of a certain affair; and Allãh issues His decree as a result of His knowledge that encompasses all those aspects; His vision is not limited to one or two sides only. Had there been one fixed cause or attribute, there would have been no change or difference between a believer and a non-believer, between a

pious person and a debauchee; but there are numerous causes and attributes, and their sum-total often has effects quite different from the effect of its individual parts.

Therefore, intercession, and the consequent waiver of punishment — based on sum-total of numerous causes like mercy, pardon, judgement, and giving everyone his due right — does not entail any change in the established course, nor any deviation from the right path.

Third Objection: Intercession, according to common under-standing, prevails upon the authority to do against his original will. In other words, the original will is abrogated and changed because of the intercessor. A just judge would never accept an intercession unless his knowledge is changed, e.g., his original judgement was wrong, and then he was made to realize that justice demanded a course opposite to his original plan. An unjust judge would accept intercession of his friends knowing fully well that the course suggested was wrong; but he values his personal relations more than the demands of justice and equity. Obviously, both these alternatives are impossible so far as Allãh is concerned; His will is related to His knowledge, and His knowledge is eternal and unchangeable.

Reply: Intercession has nothing to do with change of will or knowledge. What actually changes is the thing willed about or known. Allãh knows that a certain man will pass through various stages in his life; for a time his condition will be excellent — and Allãh wills about him a certain will; and He knows that later his condition will change — and He wills about him another will; and every day He is in a (new) state (of glory). And He has said: *Allãh effaces what He pleases and establishes* (likewise), *and with Him is the basis of the Book* (13:39); *Nay, both His hands are spread out, He expends as He pleases* (6:64). The same happens with our knowledge and will. We know that soon night will come and we will not be

able to see in darkness, but a few hours later the sun will rise dispelling the darkness. When night comes our will is directed to light a lamp, and later when the morning comes the will is directed to extinguish that lamp. In this case, there was no change at all in our knowledge and will; what changed was the objects of that knowledge and will. And consequently they ceased to be governed by that knowledge and that will. After all, not every knowledge is related to every known object, nor every will is connected to every purpose.

What is impossible for Allãh is disagreement of His knowledge with the thing known, or of His will with its object — while that thing or object remains unchanged. In other words, it is impossible for Him to be mistaken in His knowledge or for His will to be ineffective. We see an apparition far away and take it to be a man; on coming nearer we find that it was a horse. In this case, our "knowledge" did not agree with its object; it was a mistake.
Likewise, we intend to do a certain work, then we realize that it would be wrong to do so; here our "will" was cancelled and became ineffective. But in these cases the objects of our knowledge and will had not changed. Such "disagreement" is certainly impossible for Allãh. But as we have seen, intercession and the subsequent waiver of punishment does not come into this category.

Fourth Objection: Had Allãh promised intercession, or had His prophets brought this message to their nations, the people would have been emboldened to disobey the commandments of Allãh, and to transgress the limits of the *sharī`ah.* It would have defeated the whole purpose behind the institutions of prophet-hood and religion. If we are to avoid this inherent difficulty, we shall have to interpret the relevant Qur'ãnic verses and traditions in a way that does not collide with this basic concept.

Reply — First: What will they say about the verses showing that Allãh's mercy and forgiveness is all-encompassing? For

example: *Surely Allãh does not forgive that any thing should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases* (4:48). This verse, as explained earlier, covers the cases other than repentance, as the exception of polytheism shows — because in cases of repentance even polytheism may be forgiven.

Second: The promise or message of intercession could incite people to disregard the rules of the *shari`ah,* if it were accompanied by one of the following factors:

1. If it had pin-pointed either the sinner — by name or description — who was to be forgiven through intercession; or the particular sin that was to be wiped off — unconditionally, definitely and without any ambiguity.
2. Or, if intercession were effective against all types of punishment and at all times.

Read the following sentences to understand what the above conditions mean:

"All men, or a named group of men, will never be held responsible for any sins they commit; nor will they ever be punished for their transgressions."

" A particularly named sin will never be punished for."

Obviously, such declarations would defeat the basic purpose of the *sharī`ah.*

But Allãh has kept both things vague. He has never said what sins or which sinners might benefit from intercession, nor has He said whether all or only some of the punishment would be waived; nor has He made it clear whether or not the intercession would be effective in every condition and at all times. As all these things have been kept vague, no one could be sure of getting the benefit of intercession. In view of this uncertainty, he cannot feel bold to trespass the limits of Allãh. On the other hand the possibility of intercession would save him from losing the hope of divine mercy, will keep him away from despair and despondency, from pessimism and hopelessness. Then there is the verse: *If you avoid great sins which you are forbidden, We will expiate from you your*

(small) *sins* . . . (4:31). It clearly says that Allãh will forgive small sins and waive the punishment, provided the servant shuns great sins. If Allãh can say, "If you avoid great-sins, I shall forgive the small ones", He can as easily say, "If you keep your belief pure until you come to Me with unpolluted faith, I shall accept the intercession of intercessors on your behalf." *The important thing is to keep the faith strong; the sins weaken the faith, harden the heart and lead to polytheism. Allãh has said: But none feels secure from Allãh's plan except the people who shall perish* (7:99)*; Nay! rather what they used to do has become like rust upon their hearts* (83:14); *Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they rejected the signs of Allãh* . . . (30:10) .

The hope of divine mercy (generated by the belief of intercession), in many cases, leads to repentance, piety and good deeds — and often the servant reaches a stage where intercession is not needed after all. It is in fact the most important benefit of this belief.

Likewise, if it were mentioned who would benefit from intercession or which sins were likely to be interceded about, but it was declared that it would nevertheless entail some types of punishment upto a certain period, the man could not feel bold to commit sins.

And the fact is that the Qur'ãn has nowhere pin-pointed the sin or the sinner likely to benefit from intercession. On the contrary, it speaks only of reverting the punishment from some people. And no objection can be levelled against such a vague expression.

Fifth Objection: Utmost that reason may prove is the possibility, and not the actuality, of intercession — in fact, it does not prove even that much. So far as the Qur'ãn is concerned, it does not show that intercession will actually take place. Some verses refute the idea of intercession altogether, e.g., . . . *the day comes in which there is no bargaining,*

neither any friendship nor intercession (2:254). Other verses say that intercession shall be of no avail, e.g., *So the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them* (74:48). Still others, after refuting the actuality of intercession, add the proviso like, *but by His permission* (2:255), *except after His permission* (10:3), *except for him whom He approves* (21:28). This style (a negative followed by exception of divine permission or approval) is used in the Qur'ãn invariably always to emphasize the negative statement; for example, it says: *We will make you recite so you shall not forget, except what Allãh pleases* (87:6-7); *Abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord pleases* (11:107). Obviously, there is no definite declaration in the Qur'ãn proving the actuality of intercession. As for the traditions, those giving its details are not reliable; and the reliable ones do not say more than the Qur'ãn does.

Reply: As for the verses refuting the intercession we have already explained that what they reject is the intercession without the permission of Allãh. The verse 74:48, which says that "the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them", is not a proof against intercession; on the contrary it proves its actuality. The verse is in the Chapter, "The Clothed One" and speaks about "them", i.e., a particular group of wrong-doers mentioned in verses 41 to 47; it is they who shall not benefit from the inter-cession of intercessors; it does not speak about all the sinners. Moreover, it uses the phrase, "the intercession of intercessors". There is a difference between saying, "Intercession shall not avail them", and saying, "Intercession of intercessors shall not avail them". When an infinitive verb or verbal noun is used in genitive or possessive case, it proves its actual existence, as ash-Shaykh `Abdu '1-Qãhir has clearly written in *Dalãilu 'l-i`jãz.* Therefore, the expression, "intercession of intercessors" proves that some intercession shall definitely take place on that day, although that particular group shall not be able to benefit from it. Also, the plural, "intercessors" points to the presence of a group of intercessors.

Look for example at the phrases: *she was of those who remained behind* (7:83)*; and he was one of the unbelievers* (2:34); *so he is of those who go astray* (7:175)*; My covenant does not include the unjust ones* (2:124). The plurals in all these phrases would have been irrelevant if they did not mean existence of more than two persons having the attributes mentioned. Like-wise, the verse: *So the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them,* instead of refuting the intercession, clearly proves the existence of intercessors and, therefore, intercession. As for the verses that contain the exceptions, "but by His permission", "except after His permission", they clearly prove the actuality of intercession, especially as the infinitive verb "permission" is used in genitive case (*His permission*). No one having a taste of Arabic literature can entertain any doubt about it.

It is childish to say that the two phrases, "but by His permission" and "except for him whom He approves" mean the same thing, i.e., the divine will. Moreover, the Qur'ãn has used various phrases of exception in various places, e.g., "but by His permission", "except after His permission", "except for him whom He approves" and "but he who bears witness of the truth and they know (him)". Even if we accept that the divine permission and divine approval mean the same thing, i.e., divine will, can it be said that the last-mentioned phrase (*but he who bears witness of the truth . . .*) too implies the same? Such interpretation implies such inexactness and laxity in talk as even an ordinary Arab would not like attributed to him, let alone an eloquent one. Can we accuse the most eloquent divine speech, i.e., the Qur'ãn, of such inarticulateness?

As for the traditions, we shall show later that they too follow the line adopted by the Qur'ãn.

Sixth Objection: The verses do not say clearly that on the Day of Judgement, the punishment would be averted from the wrong-doers, after the sin has been proved and the

sentence pronounced. The intercession attributed to the prophets means that they were the intermediaries between the Lord and His servant, they received revelation from their Lord and conveyed it to the people and guided them to the right path, leading them to spiritual and ethical perfection. In this sense, they are the intercessors for the believers in this world as well as in the hereafter.

Reply: No doubt, it is one of the aspects of intercession; but intercession is not limited to this much. The prophets called their people to the true faith and repentance, and this is the inter-cession mentioned by the objector. Now let us look again at the verse: *Surely Allãh does not forgive that any thing should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases* (4:48). As described earlier, this verse covers the cases other than the true faith and repentance. (True faith and repentance would wipe out the polytheism too.) The exception of polytheism shows that here the talk is about other things — and intercession, in the meaning explained by us, is one of those cases.

Seventh Objection: Reason does not prove that intercession really exists; and the Qur'ãnic verses on this subject are ambiguous — in one place they prove it, at others refute it; sometimes they add some proviso, at the other they speak unconditionally. Therefore, the ethics of religion demands that we should believe in all of them and leave their meaning to Allãh.

Reply: The ambiguous verses, when referred to the decisive ones, become decisive themselves. It is an easy process which is not beyond our ability and power. We shall explain this subject when writing about the verse: *of it there are some verses decisive, they are the basis of the Book, and others are ambiguous . . .* (3:7).

3. WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM INTERCESSION?

As explained earlier, it was not in the best interest of religious guidance to pin-point who should benefit from intercession on the Day of Judgement. But vague hints and ambiguous statements can do no harm, and the Qur'ãn has used them to give us a general idea. Allãh says: *Every soul is held in pledge for what it has earned, except the people of the right hand, in gardens; they shall ask each other about the guilty*: "*What has brought you into hell?" They shall say*: "*We were not of those who prayed; and we used not to feed the poor; and we used to enter* (into vain discourse) *with those who entered* (into vain discourse); *and we used to call the Day of Judgement a lie, till death overtook us." So the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them* (74:38-48). The verses declare that every soul shall remain mortgaged on the Day of Judgement for the sins it has earned, held responsible for the wrongs done in this life. The only exception is of the people of the right hand — they shall be released from that pledge, and shall settle in the gardens. They shall see the wrong-doers who shall be held captive of their sins, and herded into hell; they shall ask them for the reason of their entering into hell, and the guilty shall reply by enumerating four sins as the cause of their disgrace and punishment. And because of those sins, they shall lose the benefit of the intercession of intercessors.

It implies that the people of the right hand would be free from those sins which deprive a man of the benefit of intercession. Allãh shall release them from the fetters of sins and wrongs; and this release shall be as a result of the intercession of intercessors.

The verses are a part of the Chapter 74, (The Clothed One); it was revealed at Mecca at the beginning of the Call, as its con-tents amply prove. At that time the prayer and *zakãt* as known to us were not promulgated. In this context the prayer, mentioned in the verse, "We were not of those who prayed",

could only mean turning one's face towards Allãh with humility and submission; likewise, the verse, "and we used not to feed the poor", could only refer to general spending on the poor in the way of Allãh. *al-Khawḍ* (الخَوْضُ = translated here as entering into vain discourse) literally means to wade into water, to plunge or rush into something. The verse, "we used to enter (into vain discourse). . .", implies entanglement in the vain things of this life, which distract a man from remembrance of the hereafter; it may also mean vilification of the verses which remind one of the Day of Reckoning.

Those wrong-doers, therefore, shall be guilty of four sins: (1) Not turning their faces towards Allãh with humility and sub-mission; (2) not spending in the way of Allãh; (3) vilification of divine revelations; and (4) calling the Day of Judgement a lie. These four evils destroy the foundation of religion. Religion demands following the purified guides, setting one's face towards Allãh, turning away from the worldly distractions, setting one's eyes on the Day of Judgement. If a man succeeds in it, he will be free from the third and the fourth sins, i.e., vilification of divine revelation and calling the Day of Judgement a lie. When, in this way, his fundamental belief is secured, he shall feel the urge to turn towards Allãh and to help fellow human beings. These two factors are represented in these verses by prayer and spending in the way of Allãh. Faith and deed all would thus combine to build the structure of religion. Other elements, like belief in Oneness of God and the prophethood, would naturally follow.

The people of the right hand are the ones who shall benefit from the intercession; and they are the ones whose religion and faith Allãh is pleased with. They may come on the Day of Judgement with perfect deeds — and in that case there will be no need for any intercession; or they may come burdened with some sins — and it is they who shall benefit from the intercession. Therefore, the intercession shall be for those people of the right hand who may have committed some sins.

Allãh says: *If you avoid the great sins which you are forbidden, We will expiate from you your* (small) *sins* (4:31). Therefore, anybody coming on the Day of Judgement with an unexpiated sin shall certainly be guilty of a great sin — had it been a small one it would have been expiated long ago. We have to conclude from this verse that the intercession shall be for those people of the right hand who shall be guilty of great sins.

The Prophet has said: "Verily my intercession is for those of my *ummah* who shall have committed great sins; as for the good-doers, there shall be no difficulty for them . . ."

The designation, "the people of the right hand", is the opposite of "the people of the left hand". These Qur'ãnic terms are based on the fact that man, on the Day of Judgement, shall be given his book of deeds either in his right hand or in the left. Allãh says: (Remember) *the day when We will call every people with their Imãm; then whoever is given his book in his right hand, these shall read their book; and they shall not be dealt with a whit unjustly. And whoever is blind in this, he shall* (also) *be blind in the hereafter; and more erring from the way* (17:71-72). We shall describe, when writing about this verse, that getting the book in the right hand is synonymous with following the rightful Imãm; likewise getting the book in the left hand means following a misguiding leader or Imãm. Allãh says about Pharaoh: *He shall lead his people on the resurrection day, and bring them down to the- fire* (11:98). It means that not only the required four qualities but even the nomenclature, "the people of the right hand", is based on the fact that they followed an approved religion, that Allãh was pleased with them.

Allãh says in another place: *and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves* (21:28). This approval is general and without any condition or qualification. It is not like the one mentioned in verse: . . . *except of him whom the*

Beneficent God allows and whose word He is pleased with (20:109), where approval or pleasure is related to a servant's word. In the verse under discussion the pleasure or approval is related to them, not to their deed; in other words, "whom He approves" means 'whose religion he approves'. Accordingly this verse too has the same import as the previous ones.

Again Allãh says: *The day on which We will gather the pious ones to the Beneficent God as the guests of honour, and We will drive the guilty to hell like* (thirsty) *herd* (to the watering place). *They shall own not any intercession, save he who has made a covenant with the Beneficent God* (19:85-87). The one who has made a covenant with Allãh shall be given possession of intercession. It should not be forgotten that not every guilty servant is an unbeliever. Allãh says: *Whoever comes to his Lord* (being) *guilty, for him is surely hell; he shall not die therein nor shall he live; and whoever comes to Him a believer* (and) *he has done good deeds indeed, these it is who shall have the high ranks* (20:74-75). According to these verses, anyone who is not a good-doing believer is guilty, no matter whether he is an unbeliever or a wrong-doing believer. The latter group, i.e., those who have true belief but have also committed sins, is the one that has made a covenant with God. Allãh says: *Did I not enjoin you* (make a covenant with you), *O children of Adam! that you should not worship the Satan? Surely he is your open enemy, and that you should worship Me; this is the straight path* (36:60 -61). The phrase, "and that you should worship Me", is a covenant in the meaning of order, enjoinment; and the sentence, "this is the straight path", is also a covenant by implication because the straight path leads to felicity and safety. However, such believers shall enter the hell because of sins they had committed, then they shall be rescued by intercession. It is to this covenant that the verse 2:80 alludes: (The Jews) *say*: "*Fire shall not touch us but for a few days.*" *Say*: "*Have you received a promise* (covenant) *from Allãh?*" These verses

too, therefore, lead us to the same conclusion, namely, the group that shall benefit from intercession on the Day of Judgement is that of the believers who would have committed great sins; it is they whose religion and belief Allãh is pleased with and has approved.

4. WHO ARE THE INTERCESSORS?

It has been described that intercession takes place in two spheres: in creation and in legislation. So far as the intercession in creation is concerned, all intermediary causes are intercessors because they are placed between the Creator and the created.

As for the intercessors in the sphere of legislation and judgement, they may be divided into two categories: (1) intercessors in this life, and (2) those in the hereafter.

Intercessors in this life: All the things that bring a man nearer to Allãh and make him eligible for divine forgiveness. The following come into this category:

a. Repentance: Allãh says: *Say*: "*O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allãh; surely Allãh forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return to your Lord . . .* " (39:53-54). It covers all the sins, even polytheism; if one repents from it and believes in One God, one's previous poly-theism is wiped out and forgiven.

b. True faith: Allãh says: *O you who believe! fear Allãh and believe in His Apostle: He will give you two portions of His mercy, and make for you a light with which you will walk, and forgive you . . .* (57:28).

c. Good deed: *Allãh has promised those who believe and do good deeds* (that there is) *for them pardon and great recompense* (5:9)*; O you who believe! fear Allãh and seek an approach* (medium) *to Him . . .* (5:35). There are many verses of this theme.

d. The Qur'ãn: *Indeed has come to you from Allãh a light and a manifest Book whereby Allãh guides him who follows His pleasure, into the ways of peace, and takes them out from darkness towards the light by His will and guides them to the straight path* (5:16).

e. Any thing related to a good deed, like the mosques, holy places and auspicious days.

f. The prophets and the apostles, as they seek forgiveness for their people. Allãh says: *and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allãh, and the Apostle had* (also) *asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allãh oft-returning* (to mercy) , *Merciful* (4:64) .

g. The angels, as they too ask forgiveness for the believers. Allãh says: *Those who bear the throne and those around it celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who believe* (40:7); . . . *and the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth* . . . (42:5).

h. The believers themselves, as they seek pardon for their believer brothers and for themselves. Allãh quotes them as saying: *and pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy on us, Thou art our Guardian* . . . (2:286).

Intercessors in the hereafter: We use the term, intercessor, in the meaning explained in the beginning. The following come into this category:

a. The prophets and the apostles: Allãh says: *And they say*: "*The Beneficent God has taken to Himself a son.*" *Glory be to Him. Nay! they are honoured servants; they do not precede Him in speech and* (only) *according to His commandment do they act. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves* . . . (21:26-28). Those who were called 'son' of God, are in fact His honoured servants and they do intercede for him whom He approves. Among them is 'Īsã,

son of Maryam, and he was a prophet. It means that the prophets do intercede for approved persons.

Again Allãh says: *And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for* (or, do not own) *intercession, but he who bears witness of the truth and they know* (him) (43:86).

b. The angels: The preceding two verses prove that the angels too may intercede, because they too were called daughters of Allãh. Moreover, Allãh says: *And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allãh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses* (53:26); *On that day shall no intercession avail except of him whom the Beneficent God allows and whose word He is pleased with. He knows what is before them and what is behind them . . .* (20:109 -110).

The witnesses: Allãh says: *And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for* (or, do not own) *intercession, but he who bears witness of truth and they know* (him) (43:86). This verse shows that those -who bear witness of the truth do own (or, have authority for) intercession. The witness mentioned here does not mean the one killed in the battlefield. It refers to the witness for the deeds, as was described in the Chapter of the Opening, and will be further explained under the verse: *And thus we have made you a medium* (*i.e.* just) *nation that you may be witnesses over the people and* (that) *the Apostle may be a witness over you . . .* (2:143).

d. The believers: They shall be joined to the witnesses on the Day of Judgement; it follows that they too may intercede like the witnesses. Allãh says: *And* (as for) *those who believe in Allãh and His apostles, these it is that are the truthful and the witnesses with their Lord . . .* (57:19).

5. INTERCESSION: ABOUT WHAT?

The intercession in creation is related to every cause in this world of the cause and effect.

As for the intercession in matters of legislation and judgement, some of them wipe out every sin and its punishment, right from polytheism to the smallest one. For example, repentance done, and true faith acquired, before the Day of Resurrection. Some wipe out effects of some particular sins, like some specified good deeds. As for the issue under discussion, i.e., the intercession of the prophets and other believers on the Day of Judgement, we have already explained that it shall avail those believers who might have committed big sins, but whose faith Allãh is pleased with.

6. WHEN WILL INTERCESSION BE EFFECTED?

We are talking here too about the intercession on the Day of Judgement to waive off the punishment of sins. We have earlier quoted the verses of the Chapter 42 (The Clothed One): *Every soul is held in pledge for what it has earned, except the people of the right hand, in gardens they shall ask each other about the guilty* (74:38-41). As explained earlier, the verses clearly say who would benefit from the intercession, and who wont. They also imply that the intercession will get the wrongdoing believers released from fetters of their sins, and protect them from abiding for ever in the hell.

But there is nothing to show that intercession might avail against the turmoils of the Day of Resurrection. Rather, the verse proves that it will be effective only for rescuing the guilty believers from the hell, or preventing them from entering into it.

It may be inferred from the verses that this talk will take place after the people of the garden have settled in the gardens, and the people of the hell in the hell; and that the intercessors shall then intercede for a group of the guilty ones

and rescue them from the hell. The phrase, “in gardens”, implies it, as does the question, “What has brought you into hell?” Both phrases imply a more or less permanent abode. Likewise, the comment, “so the intercession . . . avails them not”, denotes something occurring in present time i.e. after both groups have settled in their abodes.

As for al-Barzakh (الْبَرْزَخُ = the period between death and the Day of Resurrection) and presence of the Prophet and the Imãms of the *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (*a.s.*) at the time of death and at the questioning in the grave and the help given by them to the believer to overcome those difficulties (as will be described under the verse: *And there shall not be any one of the people of the book but he must certainly believe in him before his death* (4:159), these things have nothing to do with intercession. It is rather exercising the authority given to them by Allãh over the creation. Allãh says: . . . *and on the most elevated places there shall be men who know all by their marks, and they shall call out to the dwellers of the garden*: “*Peace be on you; they shall not have yet entered it, though they hope”. . And the dwellers of the most elevated places shall call out to men whom they will recognize by their marks, saying*: “*Of no avail were to you your amassings and your behaving haughtily. Are these they about whom you swore that Allãh will not bestow mercy on them?” “Enter the garden; you shall have no fear nor shall you grieve”* (7:46-49). It gives a glimpse of The authority or rule vested in them by the permission of Allãh. If we look at the verse 17:71 from this angle, it too throws light on this aspect: (Remember) *the day when We will call every people with their Imãm; then whoever is given his book in his right hand . . .* The intermediary position of the Imãm in calling every people and giving them their books is a sort of authority and rule vested in him by Allãh.

To make a long story short, intercession shall happen at the very last stage on the Day of Judgement; it shall bring the divine forgiveness to the guilty believers, prevent them from

entering into hell and take those out who would have entered into it; it shall be by extension of mercy and/or manifestation of benevolence and magnanimity.

TRADITIONS

al-Ḥusayn ibn Khãlid narrates from ar-Riḍã (a.s.), who narrated through his forefathers from the Leader of the faithful (a.s.) that he said: "The Messenger of Allãh (s.a.w.a.) said: 'Whoever does not believe in my reservoir, may Allãh not bring him to my reservoir, and whoever does not believe in my inter-cession, may Allãh not extend to him my intercession.' Then he (s.a.w.a.) said: 'Verily, my intercession is for those of my *ummah* who shall have committed great sins; as for the good-doers, there shall be no difficulty for them.' " al-Ḥusayn ibn Khalid said: "I asked ar-Riḍã (a.s.): 'O son of the Messenger of Allãh! what is then the meaning of the words of Allãh, Mighty and Great is He: *and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves?'* He (a.s.) said: 'They do not intercede except for him whose religion Allãh is pleased with.' " (*al-Amãli,* as-Ṣadũq)

The author says: The tradition of the Prophet, "Verily my intercession is . . .", has been narrated by both sects with numerous chains; and we have shown earlier that it is based on the theme of Qur'ãnic verses.

Sumã'ah ibn Mihrãn narrates from Abũ Ibrãhīm (a.s.) that he said about the words of Allãh: *may be your Lord will raise you to a praised position*: "The people, on the Day of Resurrection, will remain standing for forty years; and the sun will be ordered so that it will ride over their heads and they will be bridled by sweat — and the earth will be told not to accept any of their sweat. So, they shall approach Adam to intercede for them, and he will direct them to Nũh, and Nũḥ will direct them to Ibrãhīm, and Ibrãhīm will direct them to

Mũsã, and Mũsã will direct them to `Isã, and `Isã will direct them saying: ‘You should seek help of Muhammad, the last prophet.’ Thereupon, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) will say: ‘I'll do it;’ and will proceed until, arriving at the door of the garden, he will knock at it. It will be asked, ‘Who is it?’ (while Allãh knows better!), and he will say: ‘Muhammad.’ Then it will be said: ‘Open for him.’ When the door will be opened he will turn to his Lord, falling in *sajdah.* He will not raise his head until he is told: ‘Speak up and ask, you shall be given; and intercede, your intercession shall be granted.’ He will raise his head and turning to his Lord will fall (again) in *sajdah.* Then he will be promised as before; then he will raise his head. (Thereupon, he shall intercede) until he will intercede even for him who would have been burnt in the fire. Therefore, on the Day of Resurrection, no one among all the nations will be more eminent than Muhammad (s.a.w.a.); and it is (the meaning of) the words of Allãh: *May be your Lord will raise you to a praised position*.” (al-`Ayyãshi)

The author says: This meaning is narrated by both sects in great number, in detail as well as in short, with numerous chains; and it proves that the “praised position” means the position of intercession. This tradition is not in conflict with intercession of other prophets, because probably their intercession will be an off-shoot of our Prophet's, and it will begin on his hand.

`Ubayd ibn Zurarah said: “Abũ `Abdillãh (a.s.) was asked whether a believer would have the right of intercession. He said: ‘Yes.’ Then someone said: ‘Will even a believer need the intercession of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) on that day?’ He said: ‘Yes. The believers too will come with wrongs and sins; and there will be none but he shall need the intercession of Muhammad on that day.’” (`Ubayd) said: “And someone asked him about the words of the Messenger of Allãh: ‘I am the Chief of the children of Adam, and I say this without

boasting.' He said: 'Yes.' (Then) he said: 'He will hold the chain-link of the door of the garden and open it; then he will fall in *sajdah,* and Allãh will tell him:

`Raise your head, do intercede, your intercession shall be granted; ask, you shall be given.' So he will raise his head and again will fall in *sajdah;* then Allãh will (again) say to him: 'Raise your head, do intercede, your intercession shall be granted, and ask, you shall be given.' Thereupon he will raise his head and intercede — and his intercession will be accepted; and he will ask and be given." (*ibid.*)

Muhammad ibn al-Qãsim narrates through his chains from Bishr ibn Shurayh al-Baṣri that he said: "I said to Muhammad ibn Ali (a.s.): 'Which verse in the Book of Allãh is the most hope-inspiring?' He said: 'And what do your people say (about it)?' I said: 'They say, (it is the verse,) *Say*: "*O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allãh*." 'He said: 'But we, the people of the house, do not say so.' I said: 'Then what do you say about it?' He said: 'We say (it is the verse,) *And soon will your Lord give you so that you shall be well pleased.* (It means) the intercession, by Allãh the intercession, by Allãh the intercession.' " (*at-Tafsīr,* Furãt ibn Ibrãhīm)

The author says: The words of Allãh, *may be your Lord will raise you to a praised position,* refers to the Prophet's glorious position of intercession, as the numerous traditions of the Prophet himself prove. Moreover, the wording of the verse too supports it: "will raise you" shows that it is a position which he will attain in future, i.e. on the Day of Judgement; "praised" is general and unconditional, and implies that he shall be praised by all men, past and present. *al-Ḥamd* (الحَمْدُ) means to praise someone for a good done to you intentionally. This definition shows that the Prophet will do something by his own will and power which will benefit all of them and in return everyone

will praise him. That is why the Imãm said in the tradition of 'Ubayd ibn Zurarah, "and there will be no one but he shall need the intercession of Muhammad on that day."

We shall later explain it further.

Now about the declaration that the verse, "and soon will your Lord give you so that you shall be well pleased," is the most hope-inspiring one in the Qur'ãn — especially when compared to the verse, *Say*: "*O my servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allãh; surely Allãh forgives the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. And return to your Lord and submit to Him before there comes to you the punishment . . . and follow the best that has been revealed to you . . .*" (39:53 -55). *al-Qunut* (القُنُوطُ = to lose hope, to despair) has been mentioned several times in the Qur'ãn. Allãh quotes Ibrãhīm (a. s.) as saying: *And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord but the erring ones* (15:56). Also He quotes Ya`qũb (a.s.): *surely none despairs of Allãh's mercy except the unbelieving ones* (12:87). But the con-text in both places shows it as referring to losing hope of divine mercy in matters of creation. As for the verse under discussion the context shows that it admonishes against losing hope of divine mercy in matters of legislation and judgement; look for instance at the words, *who have acted extravagantly against their own souls.* They clearly say that one who has committed sins should not despair of the mercy of Allãh. Also Allãh has promised forgiveness for the *faults altogether* without any exception. But this promise is followed by admonition to repent (*turn to your Lord*) and submit to Allãh and follow the divine commandments. The text on the whole demonstrates that a man who might have committed sins need not despair of the mercy of Allãh as long as he is in a position to turn to Allãh, to submit to Him, and to follow His commandments. In short, this mercy is conditional. And there is a vast difference between this conditional mercy and the

all-encompassing, unconditional mercy and unrestricted granting and pleasing which Allãh has promised His Apostle, who himself was a mercy for all the mankind. It is that promise which will make the Apostle of Allãh (s. a. w. a.) well pleased: *and soon will your Lord give you, so that you shall be well pleased.*

This last-mentioned verse occurs in a context where Allãh mentions His grace and bounties to the Prophet; it is a unique promise never made to anyone else. The phrase, "will give you," is unconditional and unrestricted. A promise, somewhat similar, has been made to a group of the people of the garden: *they shall have what they please with their Lord* (42:22); *They have therein what they wish and with Us is more yet* (50:35). These verses show that those people shall be given more than they wish for — and man by nature desires all that he can think of happiness, good and felicity. It means that they shall be given more than they can think of, as Allãh says: *So no soul knows what is hidden for them of the joy of the eyes* (32:17). Now this is what Allãh has promised those who believe and do good; and even this is beyond human imagination. Surely, what He shall give to His Prophet as His special grace must be far greater than this.

This much about the grace of Allãh. Now let us reflect upon "you shall be well pleased". Obviously this pleasure has no relation whatsoever to the pleasure a man should have for whatever Allãh gives Him and decrees for him. Allãh is the Master and the servant has nothing of his own except the inherent need and poverty. He must always be happy and grateful for whatever his Master gives him, no matter whether it is more or less, big or small; he must always be pleased with whatever Allãh decrees for him, whether it looks comforting or distressing. This is what is expected of every good believer; surely the Prophet knows this ideal better, and acts upon it more perfectly, than anyone else; in short, he likes for himself only that which Allãh wills for him. Therefore, it would have been superfluous and irrelevant to

say that he would be pleased after he was given something. It follows that this promised pleasure refers to something else. It refers to that happiness or satisfaction which a needy person experiences when his need is fully met. A similar promise was given to some of His virtuous servants: (As for) *those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men. Their reward with their Lord is gardens of perpetuity beneath which rivers flow, abiding therein for ever; Allãh is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him; that is for him who fears his Lord* (98:7-8). Its context shows that this too is to show some special divine favour for them, and hence it must be a very exclusive and comprehensive pleasure. At this juncture, it should be mentioned that Allãh has praised His Apostle in these words: *to the believers* (he is) *compassionate, merciful* (9:128).

Keeping all these things in view, ponder on this question:

Can the Prophet be pleased to enjoy the bounties of the garden, or can he be happy with the pleasures of the paradise, when some believers are imprisoned inside the hell? Remember that they are the people who believed in Allãh as the One God, in the Prophet as the true prophet, and in what he brought with him as the true revelation; but they were overcome by their indiscretion and Satan twisted them between his fingers as a toy, and so they committed errors and sins — without any thought of revolting against God, of any arrogance before Him. Even we, when we remember what mistakes we committed in past, what chances of spiritual perfection we missed before, we start blaming ourselves for all the shortcomings; then if we see some inexperienced youth indulging in youthful frolics, we are reluctant to condemn them; we feel compassion for them. But this mercy of ours is a manifestation of the imperfect compassion put in our nature by the Creator. How can we understand the mercy of the Lord of the worlds, in a place where the magnanimity of the compassionate, merciful Prophet and the mercy of the Most Merciful of all have to decide about the indiscretions of a

power-less human being? Especially so when he had undergone all the torments of *al-barzakh* in proportion to his misdeeds?

al-Qummi narrates a tradition in his *at-Tafsīr,* under the verse: *And intercession will not avail aught with Him save of him whom He permits* (34:23), that Abu '1-`Abbas al-Mukabbar said: "A servant of a wife of `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn (a.s.), named Abu Ay-man, came (to the fifth Imãm — a.s.) and said: 'O Abũ Ja'far! You mislead the people, saying, intercession of Muhammad, intercession of Muhammad.' (Hearing this) Abu Ja'far became so angry that his face took a glowering expression; then he said: 'Woe unto you! O Abũ Ayman! Are you deluded by chastity of your stomach and genitals? Why, when you will see the terrors of the resurrection, you shall certainly be in need of intercession of Muhammad. Fie on you! Would he intercede except for him who would have been sentenced to the fire?' (Then) he said: `There is no one from the early people to the later ones but he will need the intercession of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) on the Day of Resurrection.' Then again Abũ Ja'far said: 'Certainly the Messenger of Allãh has (authority of) intercession for his *ummah,* and we have (authority of) intercession for our Shl'ahs, and our Shi'ahs have (authority of) intercession for their families.' Then he said: 'And surely a believer shall intercede for (very large number of) people like the (tribes of) Rabi'ah and Mudar. And surely a believer shall intercede for his servant, saying: "O my Lord! I owe this to him, he was protecting me from heat and cold." '

The author says: This tradition refers to a general intercession ("There is no one from the early people to the later ones but he will need the intercession of Muhammad . . .") and a particular one ("Fie on you! Would he intercede except for him who would have been sentenced to the fire?"). We find similar idea in al-'Ayyãshi's tradition from 'Ubayd ibn Zurarah mentioned earlier. There are other traditions of the same

theme narrated by both sects. It is supported also by the verse: *And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for intercession, but he who bears witness of the truth and they know* (him) (43:86). This verse shows that the prerequisite of inter-cession is the witnessing of the truth. The witnesses are the intercessors, the owners of the intercession. And we shall describe under verse 2:143 (*And thus We have made you a medium* [just] *nation that you may be witnesses over the people and* [that] *the Apostle may be a witness over you*), that the prophets are the witnesses and that Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is the witness over them; so he (s.a.w.a.) is the witness over the witnesses, and thus he is the intercessor for the intercessors; and without the testimony of the witnesses the foundation of the Day of Judgement would crumble.

The (fifth) Imãm said about the verse, *And intercession will not avail aught with Him save him whom He permits*: "No prophet or apostle may intercede until Allãh permits him, except the Apostle of Allãh, because Allãh has alread given him permission before the Day of Resurrection; and intercession is (allowed) to him and to the Imãms from his progeny, and after that to the prophets." (*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummi)

`Ali (a.s.) said: "The Apostle of Allãh (s. a. w. a.) said: 'Three (groups) shall intercede with Allãh and their intercession will be accepted: The prophets, then the (religious) scholars, then the martyrs.' " (*al-Khiṣãl*)

The author says: *ash-Shuhadã'* (الشُّهَدَاء) in the Qur'ãnic terminology means witnesses of the deeds; but in the traditions of the Imãms it is generally used for the martyrs who are killed in the way of Allãh. And apparently it is in this meaning that the word has been used in this traditions.

The Imãm said: "We have the (authority of) intercession; and the people who love us have the (authority of) intercession." (*ibid.*)

The author says: Numerous traditions prove that the Lady of paradise, Fãṭimah (a.s.) has the power and authority of inter-cession, as do his descendants other than the Imãms. Likewise, a lot of traditions bestow similar authority on the believers — even to their miscarried foetus. There is a well-known tradition that the Prophet said: "Marry (and) procreate; for I shall boast of you (i.e. your number) against other nations on the Day of Resurrection — even of miscarried foetus; he shall stand at the door of the garden in a restive mood; he shall be told to enter, but he will say: 'No, until my parents enter it …' "

Abũ Abdillãh narrates, through his father and grandfather, from `Ali (a.s.) that he said: "The garden has eight gates: one for the entry of prophets and the truthful ones, the other for the martyrs and the good ones; and five gates are for the entry of our Shi'ahs and lovers — I shall be standing on the *as-Sirat* (الصِّرَاط = the path; the bridge over the hell) praying and saying: 'My Lord! save my Shi `ahs and my lovers and my helpers and those who followed me in the (life of the) world.' Then all of a sudden there will come a voice from inside the throne: 'Your prayer is granted and your intercession for your Shi'ahs accepted. And every Shi'ah of mine and everyone who loves me, helps me and fights my enemies by (his) deed or word, shall intercede for seventy thousand of his neighbours and relatives — and (there is) a gate from which shall enter all the Muslims who witness that there is no god except Allãh and in whose heart there is not an iota of enmity towards us, the people of the house." (*ibid.*)

Ḥafṣ al-Mu'adhdhin narrates that Abũ `Abdillãh (a. s.) wrote, *inter alia,* in a letter to his companions: "And know that none of the creatures of Allãh shall avail you against Him., neither an angel who is near to Him, nor an apostle prophet nor any one below them. Whoever likes intercession of intercessors to avail him, should ask Allãh to be pleased with him." (*al-Kãfĩ*)

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "Jabir told Abũ Ja'far (a.s.): 'May I be your ransom, O son of the Apostle of Allãh! Narrate to me a tradition about your grandmother, Fãṭimah.' (Then the tradition continues, mentioning the intercession of Fãṭimah on the Day of Resurrection, until it says:) Abũ Ja'far (a.s.) said: 'Then, by God, no one among the people will remain (unsaved) except a doubting one or an unbeliever or a hypocrite. When they shall be (put) into (various) ranks of the hell, they shall cry out — as Allãh has said — *So we have no intercessors, nor a true friend: But if we could but once return, we would be of the believers* (26:100-102): Then Abũ Ja'far (a.s.) said: 'But oh! how preposterious! They shall be denied what they asked for; *and if they were sent back they would certainly return to what they were forbidden, and most certainly they are liars* (6:28) .' " (*at-Tafsīr,* Furãt ibn Ibrãhīm)

The author says: The Imãm has proved by the sentence, "So we have no intercessors", that intercession will take place on the Day of Judgement. In this light, it is amusing to see our adversaries trying to use it as an argument against intercession! Just as we said about the verse, *So the intercession of intercessors avails them not* (74:48), this verse too shows that intercession will surely take place on that day. If the Qur'ãn wanted to negate the inter-cession altogether, it would have used the singular form (. . . no intercessor nor a true friend). But it has used the plural, "So we have no intercessors"; and it proves that there shall be a group interceding on behalf of some people, but it will not be of any avail to those particular speakers. Moreover, the following sentence, "But if we could but once return, we would be of the believers," shows a desire within the frame of grief. Obviously such a desire is related to that thing loss of which has caused the grief. Therefore, what this sentence implies is this: Would that we could return to the previous life; then we would be of the believers, so that the intercession of

intercessors would avail us too, as it has benefited the believers. The verse, therefore, is a good proof for intercession.

al-Kazim (a.s.) narrated from his father, through his fore-fathers, from the Prophet that he said: “My intercession is for those of my *ummah* who would have committed big sins; as for the doers of good, there shall be no difficulty for them.” He was asked: “O son of the Messenger of Allãh! How can the inter-cession be for those who would have committed big sins, while Allãh says, *and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves* (21:28); and a committer of big sins cannot be approved?” He (a.s.) said: “No believer commits a sin but he regrets it and feels ashamed. And the Prophet has said: ‘Enough is regret as a repentance.’ And also he (s.a.w.a.) has said: ‘Whoever is pleased by a good deed and displeased by a bad deed, he is a believer.’ Therefore, if there is someone who does not feel remorse for a sin he has committed, he is not a believer, and intercession will not avail him, and he will be an unjust one. And Allãh says: *the unjust shall not have any true friend nor any intercessor who should be obeyed* (40:18).” It was said to him: “O son of the Messenger of Allãh! How is it that he who is not sorry of a sin he has committed, he does not remain a believer?” He said: “Anyone who commits a big sin, knowing that he must be punished for it, will certainly feel remorse for what he has done. And as soon as he is sorry, he is repentant, eligible for intercession. But if he is not sorry, then he is persisting in it, and a persistent (sinner) is not forgiven, because he does not believe in the punishment of what he has done; had he believed in that punishment, he would have been sorry. And the Prophet has said: ‘No big sin abides with apologizing, and no small sin remains (small) with persistence.’ And as for the words of Allãh, *and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves,* it means that they do not intercede except for him whose religion He approves. Religion is an acknowledgement

that good and bad deeds have to be recompensed. If one's religion were approved, one would feel remorse for the sins one would have committed, because he would know what their result would be on the (day of) resurrection.” (*at-Tawhid*)

The author says: The words of the Imãm, “and he will be an unjust one": It gives the definition of “unjust” as applicable on the Day of Resurrection. It alludes to the Qur'anic verse, *Then a crier will cry out among them that the curse of Allãh is on the unjust, who hinder* (people) *from Allãh's way and seek to make it crooked and they are disbelievers in the hereafter* (7:44-45). Accordingly, unjust is he who does not believe in the Day of Judgement; naturally, such a man would not be sorry if he neglected to do what he was ordered to do, or if he indulged in sins and crimes. May be, he outright rejects basic truths and teachings of religion; or may be he just does not care, is not worried of punishment of sins on the Day of Reckoning. In later case, his verbal acknowledgement of the Day of Judgement would be but a joke and mockery.

“. . . as soon as he is sorry, he is repentant, eligible for intercession": The adjective, repentant, is not used here in its well-known terminological sense — repentance (in the terminological sense) is by itself the best intercessor and saviour. What the Imãm meant here is this: If he feels remorse for the sin committed, he returns to Allãh, his religion is thus approved by Him, and therefore he becomes eligible for intercession.

“And the Prophet has said: ‘No big sin abides with apologizing . . .’ “: The Imãm narrated this tradition to prove that persistence in a sin (even a small one) changes it from its original smallness to a far greater transgression — it shows one's disbelief in the Day of Judgement and injustice towards the signs of Allãh. And such a thing is not forgiven. A sin is forgiven if the sinner sincerely repents, or if intercession

avails him — and this depends on his religion being approved; and both repentance and approved religion are absent in case of persistence.

A similar theme is found in a tradition quoted in *`Ilalul 'shsharãi`* from Abũ Ishãq al-Laythi that he said: "I said to Abũ Ja'far Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Bãqir (a.s.): 'O son of the Messenger of Allãh! Tell me about a believer, possessing religious understanding when he reaches (a high point in) knowledge and becomes perfect, does he commit fornication?' He said: 'By God! No.' I said: 'Then does he indulge in sodomy?' He said: 'By God! No.' I said: 'Then does he steal?' He said: 'No.' I said: 'Then does he drink intoxicant?' He said: 'No.' I said: 'Then does he commit any of the big sins or indulge in any of these indecencies?' He said: 'No.' I said: 'Then does he commit a sin?' He said: 'Yes, and he is a believer, sinner, submissive.' I said; 'What does sub-missive mean?' He said: 'The submissive (servant) does not persist in it, does not keep doing it . ."

ar-Riḍã (a.s.) narrated through his forefathers that the Messenger of Allãh (s.a.w.a.) said: "When the resurrection comes, Allãh, Great and Mighty is He, will manifest Himself to His believing servant, and will remind him of his sins one by one; then Allãh will forgive him; Allãh will not let (even) a near angel or an apostle prophet know of his (sins), and will cover it lest anyone becomes aware of it. Then He will say to his bad deeds: 'Be good deeds.' "(*al-Khiṣãl*)

Abũ Dharr said: "The Messenger of Allãh (s.a.w.a.) said: 'A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection; and it will be said: "Show him his small sins; and keep back from him his big sins." Then it will be said to him: "You did so and so on such and such a day." And he will go on confessing, while apprehensive of his big sins. Then it will be said: "Give him a good deed in place of every bad deed." Then he will say: "I had done some sins which I do not see (mentioned) here." ' " Abũ Dharr said: "And I saw the Messenger of Allãh laughing

until his teeth were shown." (Muslim)

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "When the Day of Resurrection comes, Allãh, Glorified and Sublime is He, shall spread His mercy until even Iblīs will hope for His mercy." (*al-Amãli,* as-Ṣadũq)

The author says: The last three traditions are of general nature. The traditions about intercession of the Prophet, emanating from the Imãms of *Ahlu 'l-bayt* as well as from the Sunni sources have successively been narrated by so many narrators as to leave no room for any doubt about their authenticity. Altogether they prove that intercession will take place, and that it will avail the believers who might have committed sins; it will prevent them from entering into hell, or will rescue them from it if already sent therein. It is however certain that the sinning believers shall not be allowed to abide for ever in the hell. And we have earlier explained that the Qur'ãn too does not say more than this.

A PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEMPLATION

According to Abu 'Ali Ibn Sīnã, intellectual reasoning cannot give us details concerning the resurrection and judgement (as given in the Qur'ãn and *sunnah*), as it lacks the premises necessary to lead to a conclusion. Nevertheless, it may contemplate the future of man after the soul leaves the body and lives in the form of (Platonic) ideas — how it proceeds on the path of happiness or unhappiness reaching the ultimate station.

Whatever man does in beginning leaves an imprint on his psyche — either of happiness or unhappiness. By "happiness" we mean what is good for him as a man; on the other hand, "unhappiness" denotes what is bad for him as a man. If the action is repeatedly performed the imprint becomes deeper and deeper until it becomes a deep-rooted characteristic, until it

reshapes the psyche in its own mould.

If the mould is good, the resulting shape as well as the actions emanating from it are good and agreeable to the man "as a man", and man is "happy". If on the contrary the mould is bad, the resulting shape and actions become ugly and disagreeable to the man "as a man"; and although the deformed psyche seemingly enjoys those actions, in reality it remains unhappy "as a man". Here we are talking about a man who is happy in his psyche and good in his deed *vis-a-vis* a man who is unhappy in his psyche and evil in his deeds.

It is the former that is the subject of our discussion here. A man may be good and happy in his person, because he has got correct belief of eternal truth; but his psyche has been polluted by the sins and transgressions committed as a result of weakness of flesh and error of judgement and choice. Consequently, psyche becomes "unhappy". But this pollution and unhappiness is a matter of constraint that has been forced on his inherently happy psyche; and we know from intellectual reasoning that constraint does not continue for ever. That soul will most certainly get rid of that unhappiness, pollution and rust in the fire of chastisement in al-Barzakh or on the Day of Judgement — it depends on its own strength and stage of inner perfection.

The opposite is true for the later group. Whatever the effects of good deeds, they are no more than cosmetics; it is a forced appearance not agreeable to its inner-self; and sooner or later it is bound to disappear.

There remains a fifth category: The soul which could not turn its potentials into achievements — good or bad — in this life. They will remain in suspense, waiting for the divine judgement.

This much could be discerned from intellectual reasoning, concerning the reward and punishment, the inseparable results of the deeds.

Reasons also prove that existence has various grades of

perfection — ideally perfect or less so, stronger or weaker. Consequently, the souls have various ranks in relation to the Creator — nearer to, or further from him. They are therefore one above the other, the highest being the nearest to the First Cause. They are the most perfect and ideal souls, like those of the prophets (may peace of Allãh be on them!). They may become the mediums through which the unnatural pollution and rust may be removed from the weaker souls which are further below. It is this role which we call intercession.

A SOCIAL DISCOURSE

Some people say:

"Human society cannot continue without some laid rules, nor without an authority to look after its affairs. When all members maintain discipline and obey the rules, social justice is maintained and strengthened. This system is based on temporal benefits which the society cannot do without, as well as on spiritual and ethical ideals, like truth, sincerity, keeping one's word etc. which the development and good of the society depend upon. For these rules and regulations to have any force and effect, it was necessary for them to be accompanied by punishment laid down for the transgressors. Only in this way the system could be protected against the wilful transgression of some and indifference and negligence of others. That is why when a government (no matter which ideology it follows) is strong and capable enough to make people obey its edicts, the country marches forward, and society proceeds on the path of development. On the contrary when it is weak, the country is overcome by lawlessness and disorder, and plagued by troubles and turmoils.

"In view of the above, it is essential for the good of society to make people believe that they could not escape the consequences if they transgressed the law. Nothing should be

said or done to raise a hope in them that they could avoid the punishment by some means, like intercession, bribe or deception.

“The biggest objection against Christianity is aimed at its belief of atonement: That Christ was crucified in order to atone for the sins of his followers. Now the Christians rely on that atonement to get salvation in the next world, without caring what they do in this life. Religion, in this way, destroys the very foundation of society, retards civilization and pulls it backwards. Data show that lie and injustice is found in ardent followers of religion to a far greater extent than in those who do not follow any religion. Its only reason is that the former are confident that their sins would certainly be wiped off through intercession.”

This is in short what some “scholars” hold against the belief of intercession: That it weakens the foundation of civilization and social justice. But neither Islam proves intercession, in the meaning they have given it, nor the intercession which Islam speaks of gives the result they have claimed. Before writing against intercession, as taught by Islam, they should learn what Islam teaches, how it applies its laws to the society, what type of intercession it promises and how, when and to what extent it is to be applied and effected:

First: What the Qur'ãn confirms of the intercession is this: The believers shall not abide in the hell, on the Day of Resurrection, provided they come to their Lord with approved belief and true faith. Thus, it is a conditional promise. Then it has emphasized that the faith remains in grave danger from sins, especially the big ones, and more particularly if one persists in them. Such a believer would be tottering on the brink of eternal damnation. When a believer remembers that promise, his hope of deliverance soars high; when he needs this warning, he is over-come by dread of perdition. His soul remains hovering between hope and fear; he worships his Lord both with love and awe. Thus, he spends his life in a moderate way,

on the middle course. He experiences neither discouragement of pessimism, nor the rashness of over-optimism.

Second: Islam has made comprehensive laws for temporal and spiritual upliftment of the society; these laws cover all aspects of life of an individual and a group. It has prescribed suitable punishments for those who violate any of those rules — from monetary compensation to chastisement to firmly fixed punishment — until a stage comes when the offender is deprived of his rights as a member of society and is condemned to eternal shame, or even death. All this system has been entrusted into the hands of divinely appointed *ulu 'l-amr* (أولُو الأمْر = people vested with authority). Then each Muslim has been made responsible for all other Muslims, as he is obliged to enjoin his compatriots to do good and desist from evil. To cap it all, the Muslim nation is obliged to call others to the right path, and the way to affect this call is to give them good news of eternal reward if they do good and to warn them of eternal perdition if they indulge in evil.

It is this knowledge of this and the next world which is the foundation of Islam's character-building. The Prophet promulgated this system; and experiment has proved its effectiveness and potency. Its power to mould the society into divine image was proved during the time of the Prophet and continued to do so until Umayyids came into power. They made the *shari`ah* a toy to play with; put the Islam's penal code in cold storage and behaved as though they were above all law, as if nothing could hinder them in their pursuit of pleasure. The result of that exercise is before our eyes today. The standard of “freedom” has been raised; western civilization is making inroads in our society. In Islamic countries, Islam exists in name only.

It is this manifest weakening of religion and this retrogressive movement of the Muslims which has caused their fall from heights of justice and virtue, and made them slip down the plane of morality and ethics. It is their debauchery and their wallowing in their base desires and sensualities that has made them bold to transgress every limit,

to violate every rule, so much so that even the atheists look down at their debauchery, dishonesty and immorality.

This is the real and only cause of the deterioration of Muslim society. The objector is completely off the mark when he attributes this state of affairs to those sublime religious realities whose only aim, and only effect, was and is the man's felicity and happiness in this world as well as in the hereafter.

The data, mentioned in his argument, are irrelevant here. They have looked at a Muslim society which has got no guardian and no authority to enforce Islamic laws within its jurisdiction, and at an atheist society which has a strong authority to enforce its laws and to keep the people within the limits, with help of education and training of its own choice. Therefore, this comparison is quite clearly unjustified.

* * * * *

وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ
يُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَٰلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ
رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ـ ٤٩ . وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا
آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ـ ٥٠ . وَإِذْ وَاعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً
ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ـ ٥١ . ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا
عَنْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ـ ٥٢ . وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى
الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ـ ٥٣ . وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ
يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ
فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ
إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ـ ٥٤ . وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ
نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ـ ٥٥ . ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ـ ٥٦ . وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ
وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَٰكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ـ ٥٧ . وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا
هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا

وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ـــ ٥٨ . فَبَدَّلَ
الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلاً غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزاً
مِنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ـــ ٥٩ . وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَى مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا
اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْناً قَدْ عَلِمَ
كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللهِ وَلاَ تَعْثَوْا فِي الأَرْضِ
مُفْسِدِينَ ـــ ٦٠ . وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَى لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَى طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ
لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا
وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَى بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ اهْبِطُوا
مِصْراً فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَا سَأَلْتُمْ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا
بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ
النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ـــ ٦١ .

And when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who subjected you to severe torment, killing your sons and sparing your women, and in this there was a great trial from your Lord (49)*. And when We parted the sea for you, so We saved you and drowned the followers of Pharaoh while you watched by* (50)*. And when We appointed* (a time of) *forty nights with Mũsã, then you took the calf* (for a god) *after him and you were unjust* (51)*; then We pardoned you after that so that you might give thanks* (52)*. And when We gave Mũsã the book and the distinction that you might walk aright* (53)*. And when Mũsã said to his people*: "*O my people! you have surely been unjust to yourselves by taking the calf* (for a god), *therefore turn to your Creator* (penitently) *and kill your people, that is best for you with your Creator; so He*

turned to you (mercifully), *for surely He is the Oft-returning* (with mercy), *the Merciful* (54). *And when you said*: "*O Mũsã we will not believe in you until we see Allãh manifestly," so the punishment overtook you while you looked on* (55)*; then We raised you up after your death that you may give thanks* (56). *And We made the clouds to give shade over you and We sent to you manna and quails: Eat of good things that We have given you; and they did not do Us any harm, but they did harm their own selves* (57). *And when We said*: "*Enter this city, then eat from it a plenteous* (food) *wherever you wish, and enter the gate making obeisance, and say, forgiveness, We will forgive you your wrongs and give more to those who do good* (to others) (58). *But those who were unjust changed it for a saying other than that which had been spoken to them, so We sent upon those who were unjust a pestilence from heaven, be-cause they transgressed* (59). *And when Mũsã prayed for drink for his people, We said*: "*Strike the rock with your staff "So there gushed from it twelve springs; each tribe knew its drinking place*: "*Eat and drink of the provisions of Allãh and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief"* (60). *And when you said*: "*O Mũsã we cannot bear with one food, therefore pray to your Lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions. He said*: "*Will you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city, so you will have what you ask for." And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them and they returned with Allãh's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the signs of Allãh and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits* (61).

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *and sparing your women*: They left your women alive in order that they (i.e. the women) might serve them. "*al-Istiḥyã'* "(اَلاستِحيَاءُ) means to wish someone to remain alive. The word may also mean: They behaved indecently with the women until they (i.e. the women) lost their modesty.

"Yasũmũnakum" (يَسومُونَكُمْ) translated here as "they subjected you to", literally means, they imposed upon you.

QUR'ÃN: *And when We parted the sea for you*: *al-Farq* (الفَرقُ) is opposite of *al-jam'* (اَلجَمْعُ)*;* the words mean to separate and to gather, respectively. The same is the case of *al-faṣl* (اَلفَصْلُ) *vis-a-vis "al-waṣl"* (اَلوَصْلُ). To separate the sea means to part its water. "*Bikum"* (بِكُمْ), translated here as "for you", may also mean, "soon on your entering the sea" .

QUR'ÃN: *And when We appointed* (a time of) *forty days with Mũsã*: The same event has been described in Chapter 7 in these words: *And We appointed with Mũsã a time of thirty nights and completed them with ten* (more), *so the appointed time of his Lord was complete, forty nights* (7:142)

This verse mentions the total duration of the two promises together, as a tradition says.

QUR'ÃN: *therefore turn to your Creator* (penitently): *al-Bãri'* (اَلبَارِئُ) is one of the beautiful names of Allãh, as Allãh says: *He is Allãh, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful names* . . . (59:24). This name has been used three times in the Qur'ãn: twice in the verse under discussion and once in Chapter 59, quoted just above. Perhaps Allãh used this name here because it was most

suitable in the context of the event described. While it is nearer in meaning to *al-Khãliq* (اَلْخَالِقُ = the Creator) and *al-Mũjid* (المُوْجِدُ = the Inventor), it is derived from *bara'a, yabra'u, bar'an* (بَرَءَ يَبْرَءُ بَرْءً = he separated, he separates, to separate). Allãh thus separates His creation from in-existence, or He separates man from the earth. This name in this context conveys the following idea: No doubt it is very hard to repent by killing your own people. But Allãh, Who now orders you to destroy yourselves by killing, is the same God who had created you. He was pleased to create you when it was good for you; and now He has decreed that you should kill your own people, and this order too is good for you. How can He decide anything for you except that which is good, and He is your Maker and Creator. The phrase, "your Creator", points to a special relation which they have with Him, and it emphasizes the fact that the given command is not for revenge; it is based on divine love, in order to purify them.

QUR'ÃN: *that is best for you with your Creator*: This and the preceding verses (that enumerate their transgressions and sins) are addressed to the whole Jewish nation, although the sins were committed by only some groups of them and not by all. Obviously it is because they were very much united as a nation; if one did a thing, others were pleased with it. It was because of this feeling of their national unity that one group's action is attributed to the whole nation. Otherwise, not all the Israelites had killed the prophets, nor had all of them indulged in the calf-worship, or committed other sins mentioned herein. It proves that the order, "kill your people", actually meant, kill some of your people, i.e., the calf-worshippers. It may also be inferred from the words, "you have surely been unjust to yourselves by taking the calf for worship", and the words, "that is best for you with your Creator" (which apparently is the final part of the speech of Mũsã).

The words, "so He turned to you (mercifully)", prove that

their repentance was accepted. Tradition says that their repentance was accepted and sin forgiven when only a few of them had been killed. This forgiveness before the order was fully complied with shows that the command was given as a trial. The case is somewhat similar to the dream of Ibrãhīm (a.s.) and his being told to sacrifice Ismã‘īl; before he could reach the ultimate stage, he was told, *O Ibrãhīm! You have indeed made the vision come true* (37:104-105). Likewise, Mũsã (a.s.) told his people "turn to your Creator (penitently) and kill your people, that is best for you with your Creator", and Allãh confirmed the order, yet He took the killing of some as equal to the execution of all, and informed them that their repentance was accepted, "so He turned to you (mercifully)".

QUR'ÃN : *a pestilence from heaven*: "*ar-Rijz*" (اَلرِجْزُ = punishment) .

QUR'ÃN : *do not act corruptly*: "*Lã ta‘thaw*" (لاتَعْثَوْا) is derived from *al-‘ayth* and *al-‘athy* (اَلعَيْثُ ، اَلعَثْيُ); it means the biggest chaos and mischief.

QUR'ÃN: *and its cucumbers and its garlic*: "*al-Khiyãr*" (اَلخِيارُ) is cucumber; "*al-fũm*" (الفُومُ) is garlic or wheat.

QUR'ÃN : *and they returned with Allãh's wrath*: "*Bã'ũ*" (بَاءُوْا = they returned).

QUR'ÃN: *this was so because they disbelieved*: It gives the reason of preceding statement; and the next sentence, "this was so because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits" is the reason of that reason. Their disobedience and perennial excesses caused them to reject the signs of Allãh and kill the prophets. Allãh says in another verse: *Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they rejected the signs of Allãh and used to mock them* (30:10). How was the disbelief

caused by disobedience? One of the coming traditions explains it.

TRADITIONS

Abũ Ja‘far (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh: *and when We appointed* (a time of) *forty nights with Mũsã*: *“*It was thirty nights in the (divine) knowledge and measure, then something else happened (to show that it was not the final decree) and Allãh added ten more; and in this way the appointed time of his Lord, the first and the last, was completed forty days.” (al-`Ayyãshi)

The author says: This tradition supports what we have mentioned earlier that the forty was the total of the two appointed times.

`Ali (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh: *and when Mũsã said to his people*: “*O my people! you have surely been unjust to yourselves. . .* ”: “They asked Mũsã: ‘How should we repent?’ He said: ‘Some of you should kill the others.’ Thereupon, they took the knives and everyone started killing (the others), even his brother, father and son, without caring, by God! whom he killed. (It continued) till seventy thousand of them were killed. Then Allãh revealed to Mũsã: ‘*Tell them to stay their hands;’ and he who was killed was forgiven and he who remained, his repentance was accepted*.” (*ad-Durru 'l-manthũr*)

The Imãm said: “Mũsã (a.s.) went to the appointed place and time, and then came back to his people; and they had started worshipping the calf; then he told them: ‘*O my people! you have surely been unjust to yourselves by taking the calf* (for worship), *therefore turn to your Creator* (penitently) *and kill your people, that is best for you with your Creator.*’ They asked him: ‘How should we kill our people?’ Mũsã said to them: ‘Tomorrow everyone of you

should come to Baytu 'l-Maqdis[1] with a knife or a piece of iron or a sword; when I ascend the pulpit of the Children of Israel you should all keep your faces hidden, so that nobody should recognize the other at his side; then you should kill each other.' Thus seventy thousand of those who had worshipped the calf assembled in Baytu 'l-Maqdis. When Mũsã finished praying with them and ascended the pulpit, they started killing each other. (This continued) until Jibrīl came down and said: 'Now tell them, O Mũsã! to stop killing (each other), because Allãh has accepted their repentance.' And (by that time) ten thousand of them had been killed. And Allãh revealed: *that is best for you with your Creator; so He turned to you* (mercifully), *for surely His is Oft-returning* (with mercy), *the Merciful. "*(*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummī)

The author says: According to this tradition, the sentence, "that is best for you with your Creator", was said by Mũsã (a.s.) and was also used in the divine speech. In this way, Allãh con-firmed the word of Mũsã (a.s.), and made it clear that what had actually happened — the execution of ten thousand calf-worshippers — was all that was intended from the very beginning; and that the order of Mũsã was carried out in full, and not partially. According to what appears from the wording of Mũsã (a.s.), it was best for them if all of them were killed; but only some of them got killed, not all. By repeating the same words, Allãh made it clear that what Mũsã (a.s.) had meant from the words, "the best for you", was not the execution of all.

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1. Mũsã was called to the Mount Sinã' and given Torah while the Israelites were still in the wilderness. And it was at that time that the events in question took place. They had not entered Palestine at that time and Baytu 'l-Maqdis was not built yet. Therefore, the word "Baytu 'l-Maqdis" used in this tradition must mean the tent which Mũsã erected for divine worship.

The same *at-Tafsīr* says about the words of Allãh: *and We made the clouds to give shade over you*: "When Mũsã crossed the sea with the Israelites, they landed at a desert. They said: 'O Mũsã ! you have really destroyed and killed us, by bringing us from an inhabited land to a desert where there is , either any shadow or tree nor even water.' At daytime a cloud appeared over them to protect them from the sun; and at night, manna came down to them, settling on leaves, trees and stones, and they ate it; and at dinner time roasted birds fell on their dinner-spread, and when they finished eating and drinking, the birds (became alive and) flew away. And Mũsã had a stone which he used to place in the midst of the station (of the caravan) , striking it with his walking-stick and, lo! twelve springs quashed from it, as Allãh described, every spring going to the station of a particular tribe — and they were twelve tribes." (*ibid.*)

Abu '1-Ḥasan al-Hãdī (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh: *and they did not do Us any harm but they did harm their own selves*: "Surely Allãh is too powerful and too unassailable to be harmed or to ascribe any harm to Himself. But He has joined us to Himself and took any injustice done to us as an injustice done to Him, and treated our love as His love; then He revealed it in a (verse of the) Qur'ãn to His Prophet, and said: *and they did not do Us any harm, but they did harm their own selves.* The narrator says: "I said, 'This is the revelation?' He said, 'Yes.' " (*al-Kãfī*)

The author says: Nearly the same thing has been narrated from al-Bãqir (a.s.).

. . too unassailable to be harmed": It is the explanation of the Qur'ãnic expression, "they did not do Us any harm"; the next sentence, "or to ascribe any harm to Himself", rejects also the opposite proposition. Allãh can neither be harmed nor does He do any injustice Himself. Why did the narrator ask the question, "This is the revelation?" Obviously, for a negative sentence to be plausible there should be a real or hypothetic possibility of

a positive connection between the subject and its predicate. We do not say, “This wall does not see”. Why? Because wall has no possible connection with seeing. Now, Allãh can have no possible connection at all with injustice or oppression. Therefore, the sentence, “they did not do Us any harm”, would seem a superfluous and implausible assertion, because there was no need for saying that Allãh could not be harmed nor did He harm anyone — unless it was meant to convey some fine point to the listeners. And that point is this: Great persons often speak on behalf of their servants and dependants; likewise, Allãh in this verse is speaking on behalf of Muhammad and his progeny (peace be on them all), joining them to Himself in this declaration.

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) recited the verse: *this was so because they disbelieved in the signs of Allãh and killed the prophets unjustly; this was so because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits,* and then said: “By God, they did not hit them with their hands, nor did they kill them with their swords; but they heard their talks and announced it (to their enemies); so the prophets were caught on that charge and killed; this was the killing, the exceeding the limit and the disobedience.” (al-‘Ayyãshi)

The author says: A similar tradition from the same Imãm is found in *al-Kãfī.* Apparently, the Imãm inferred it from the words, “this was so because they disobeyed . . .” Needless to say that murder, and especially of the prophets, and rejection of the signs of Allãh cannot be termed as mere disobedience. It should be the other way round. But if we take the disobedience to mean disclosing the secrets then it would be perfectly right to say that they killed the prophets, because they (disobeyed them and) did not keep their secrets and thus delivered them into the hands of their enemies who killed them.

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إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَىٰ وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ـ ٦٢ .

Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabaeans, whoever believes in Allãh and the Last Day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve (62).

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

The verse first mentions the believers, and then says, "who-ever believes in Allãh . . ." The context shows that the latter phrase refers to the real belief, the true *[man,* and that the word, "those who believe", (mentioned at first) refers to those who call themselves believers. The verse says that Allãh gives no importance to names, like the believers, the Jews, the Christians or the Sabaeans. One cannot get a reward from Allãh, nor can he be saved from punishment, merely by giving oneself good titles, as they, for example, claim that: *no one will*

enter the Garden except he who was a Jew or a Christian (2:111). The only criterion, the only standard, of honour and happiness is the real belief in Allãh and the Day of Resurrection, accompanied by good deeds. It should be noted that Allãh did not say, 'who-ever of them believes'; otherwise it would have accorded some recognition to these titles, and would have implied that there was, after all, some benefit in acquiring these names.

This theme has been repeatedly expounded in the Qur'ãn. The honour and felicity depend entirely on true and sincere servitude; no name, no adjective, can do any good unless it is backed by correct belief and good deeds. This rule is applicable to all human beings, right from the prophets to the lowest rank. Look how Allãh praises His prophets with all beautiful and excellent attributes, and then says: *and if they had set up others* (with Him) *certainly what they did would have become ineffectual for them* (6:88). Also, He describes the high status and great prestige of the Holy Prophet and his companions, and then ends it with these words: *Allãh has promised those among them who believe and do good, forgiveness and a great reward* (48:29). Ponder on the significance of the phrase "among them".

Then we find that Allãh had given a man some of His signs but he went astray: *and if We had pleased, We would certainly have exalted him thereby, but he clung to the earth and followed his low desire . . .* (7:176).

There are many verses clearly showing that the honour and respect with Allãh depends on reality, not on appearance.

TRADITIONS

Salmãn al-Fãrisi said: "I asked the Prophet (s. a. w. a.) about the people of that religion which I followed (prior to Islam), and I described their (way of) prayer and worship. Then it was revealed: *Surely those who believe, and those who are*

Jews. . . " (*ad-Durru 'l-manthũr*)

The author says: Various other traditions with different chains of narrators, say that this verse was revealed about the people of Salmãn.

Ibn Faḍḍãl said: "I asked ar-Riḍã (a.s.) why "*an-Naṣãrã"* (النَّصَارى = the Christians) were given that name. He said: 'Because they were from a village called an-Nãṣirah (النّاصِرَةُ = Nazarath) in Syria.[1] Maryam and 'Isã settled there after they returned from Egypt.'" (*Ma'ãni 'l-akhbãr*)

The author says: We shall comment on this tradition when writing on the stories of 'Isã (a.s.) in Chapter 3 (The House of `Imrãn), God willing.

The same tradition says that "*al- Yahũd"* (اليَهُودُ = the Jews) got this name because they are descended from Yahũda, son of Ya`qũb. (*ibid.*)

The Imãm said: "The Sabaeans are a people, neither Zoroastrian nor Jews, neither Christians nor Muslims; they worship the stars and planets. (*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummi)

The author says: It is idol-worship of a special type; they worshipped only the idols of the stars, while others worshipped whatever idol caught their fancy.

A HISTORICAL DISCUSSION

Abu Rayḥãn al-Bīrũnī writes in his book *al- Ãthãru 'l-bãqiyah*:

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1. In those days, all the land now divided into Syria, Jordan, Lebnon and Palestine, was called Syria or Greater Syria.

“The earliest known among them (i.e., the claimants of prophethood was Yudhasaf.[1] He appeared in India at the end of the first year of the reign of Tahmũrth; and he brought the Persian script. He called to the Sabaean religion, and a great many people followed him. The Bishdadian kings and some of the Kayanis who resided in Balkh held the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets together with other elements in high esteem and believed that these luminaries were very sacred. It continued until Zoroaster appeared at the end of the thirtieth year of Peshtasav's reign. The ramnants of those Sabaeans are now in Ḥarrãn, from which they have got their new name, Ḥarrãniyyah. Also it is said that this nomenclature refers to Hãrãn, son of Tãrukh (Terah) and brother of Ibrãhīm (a.s.), as he allegedly was one of their religious leaders and its staunchest follower.

"Ibn Sancala, the Christian, has written a book against Sabaeans. In that book he has attributed many ridiculous things to this Hãrãn. For example, he describes the Sabaeans' belief about Ibrãhīm (a.s.) in these words: ‘Ibrãhīm (a.s.) was removed from their community because a white spot had appeared on his foreskin, and the Sabaeans believed that a person having a white spot was unclean, and avoided mixing with such person. To remove that defect, Ibrãhīm cut his foreskin, i.e. circumcised himself. Then he entered one of the temples; and lo! an idol called out to him: “O Ibrãhīm! you went away from us with one deflect and came back with two; get out and do not ever come back to us.” Ibrãhīm was enraged;

1- It is now almost certain that Yudhasaf is a corruption of Budhastav, the title of Gautama Buddha, the founder of Bhuddhism.

he smashed the idols; and went out. After some time, he felt remorse for what he had done, and decided to sacrifice his son on the altar of Jupiter, as it was their custom to kill their children to please the deities. When Jupiter was convinced of the sincerity of his repentance, it sent a lamb to him to slaughter in place of his son.'

" 'Abdu 'l-Masīḥ ibn Isḥãq al-Kindi wrote a book in reply of a book by `Abdullah ibn Ismail al-Hãshimi. In that book `Abdu 'l-Masīḥ writes about the Sabaeans:

" 'It is generally believed that they indulge in human sacrifice, although nowadays they cannot do so openly. But so far as our own information goes, they are monotheists who believe that God is free from every defect and evil, they describe God in negative, not positive, terms; for example, they say: Allãh cannot be defined or seen, He is not unjust or oppressive. According to them, the beautiful divine names may be used for God, but only in an allegorical sense, because no divine attribute can truly describe the reality.

They believe that the management of all affairs is done and controlled by the sky and the heavenly bodies; the sky and those bodies are living things having the characteristics of speech, hearing and sight. They revere the light and the luminaries. One of their legacies is the dome above the niche in the Umayyad mosque of Damascus; it was their prayer house, and at that time even the Greeks and the Romans followed the same religion. Then it came under Jewish control and they turned it into a synagogue. Later, the Christians took it over and converted it into a church. Then came the Muslims, and they changed it into a mosque. The Sabaeans had their numerous places of worships, and their idols were named after various names of the sun, and shaped with fixed patterns, as has been described by Abu Ma'shar al-Balkhi in his book, *The Houses of Worship*. For example, there was the temple of Ba'labak which housed the idol of the sun; of Qirãn, which was related to the moon and

built in the moon's shape, like a shawl worn over head and shoulders. And there is a village nearby, Salamsīn by name; it is a corruption of its original name, صَنَمْ سِيْن (Sanam Sīn = the idol of the moon). Likewise, another village is called Tara`ũz, that is, the gate of venus. They do also claim that the Ka‘bah and its idols belonged to them, and that the Meccan idol-worshippers were of the Sabaean religion. According to them the idols, Lãt and `Uzza, represented Saturn and Venus. They have many prophets in their hierarchy, most of them being the Greek philosophers, for example, Hermes of Egypt, Agadhimun, Walles, Pythagoras and Babaswar (maternal grandfather of Plato) and many others like them. Some of them do not eat fish — lest it be spume; nor poultry, because it is always hot. Also, they do not use garlic, because it creates headache and burns the blood and semen (which is the source of continuity of the human race); and they avoid beans, because it dulls the intelligence and also because it had first sprouted in a human skull. They observe three compulsory prayers: at sunrise (eight *rak`at*); at noon (five *rak`at*); and at the third hour of the night.

" 'They prostrate three times in each *rak'ah.* Also, they observe two optional prayers — at the second and ninth hours of the day.

" 'They pray with *ṭahãrah* and *wuḍũ'*; they take bath after *janãbah;* but they do not circumcise their children because they have not been told to do so. Most of their laws concerning marital and penal codes are like the *sharī‘ah* A of Islam; while the rules about touching a dead body are similar to Torah's. They offer sacrifices to the stars, their idols and the temples; the sacrificial animals are killed by the priests and witch-doctors, who read in it the future of the man who offers the sacrifice and answer to his questions.

" 'Hermes is sometimes called Idrīs, who is mentioned in Torah as Akhnũkh. Some of them say that Yũdhasaf was Hermes.

" 'Some others have said that the present-day Ḥarrãniyyah

are not the real Sabaeans; rather these are mentioned in the books as heathens and idolaters. The Sabaeans were those Israelites who stayed behind at Babylon when their majority returned to Jerusalem in the reigns of Cyrus and Artaxerxes. They were favourably disposed to Zoroastrian beliefs, as well as to the religion of Nebuchadnezzar. What resulted from this exercise was a mixture of Judaism and Zoroastrianism — like the Samaritans of Syria. Most of them are found in Wasit and the rural areas of Iraq around Ja‘far and Jamidah; they trace their genealogy to Enosh, son of Seth. They criticize and oppose the Harraniyyah and their religion. With exception of a few things, there is no similarity between the two religions: The Sabaeans face towards the North Pole in their prayers, while the Harraniyyah face towards the South Pole.

" 'Some people of the book have said that Methuselah had a son (other than Lamech), named Sabi, whom the Sabaeans have descended from. The people, before the *shari`ah* spread and before Yudhasaf appeared on the scene, followed Samanian beliefs; they lived in the eastern part of the world and worshipped idols. Their remnants are found in India, China and Taghazghaz, and the people of Khurasãn call them Shamnãn. Their relics, places of worship and idols are seen in eastern Khurasãn adjoining India. They believe in eternity of the universe and transmigration of soul. According to them, the sky is falling down in an endless vacuum, and that is why it is moving round and round.'

"According to some writers, a group of them rejects the theory of eternity of the universe and says that it came into being one million year ago."

The author says: All the above description has been taken from the book of al-Bīrũnī. The opinion, attributed to some writers, that Sabaeans' religion was a mixture of Judaism and Zoroastrianism flavoured with some elements of Ḥarrãniyyah's beliefs, seems better suited in this context; after

all, the verse obviously enumerates the groups which followed a divinely-inspired religion.

* * * * *

وَإِذْ أَخذنا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفعنَــــا فوقَكُمْ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا
آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ــ ٦٣. ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ
مِنْ بَعْــــدِ ذَلِكَ فَلَوْلاَ فَضْلُ اللهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ ــ ٦٤ . وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ
فَقُلْنا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَــــاسِئِينَ ــ ٦٥ . فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالاً لِمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ــ ٦٦ . وَإِذْ قَــــالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ
إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقَرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُواً قَالَ أَعُوذُ
بِاللهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ــ ٦٧ . قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ
لَنا مَا هِيَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌ
بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ ــ ٦٨ . قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ
لَنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا قَــــالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ
النَّاظِرِينَ ــ ٦٩ . قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ
عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِنْشَاءَ اللهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ــ ٧٠ . قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لاَ
ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلاَ تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَاشِيَةَ فِيهَا قَالُوا الآنَ
جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ فَذَبَحُوهَــــا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ــ ٧١ . وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْساً
فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ــ ٧٢ . فَقُلْنَا

اضربوه ببعضها كذلك يحيي الله الموتى ويريكم آياته لعلكم
تعقلون ـ ٧٣ . ثم قست قلوبكم من بعد ذلك فهي كالحجارة أو
أشد قسوة وإن من الحجارة لما يتفجر منه الأنهار وإن منها لما
يشقق فيخرج منه الماء وإن منها لما يهبط من خشية الله وما الله
بغافل عما تعملون ـ ٧٤ .

And when We took a promise from you and lifted the mountain over you": *"Take hold of what We have given you with firmness and bear in mind what is in it, so that you may guard* (against evil)" (63). *Then you turned back after that; so were it not for the grace of Allãh and His mercy on you, you would certainly have been among the losers* (64) . *And certainly you have known those among you who exceeded the limits of the Sabbath, so We said to them*: *"Be apes, despised and hated"* (65). *So We made them an example to those who witnessed it and those who came after it, and an admonition to those who guard* (against evil) (66). *And when Mũsã said to his people*: "*Surely Allãh commands you that you should sacrifice a cow"; they said*: *"Do you ridicule us?" He said*: *"I seek the protection of Allãh from being one of the ignorants"* (67). *They said*: *"Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is". Mũsã said*: *"He says, Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age nor too young, of middle age between that* (and this); *do therefore what you are commanded"* (68) . *They said*: "*Call on your Lord for*

our sake to make it plain to us what her colour is." Mũsã said: *"He says, Surely she is a yellow cow; her colour is intensely yellow, giving delight to the beholders"* (69). *They said*: *"Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allãh please we shall surely be guided aright"* (70). *Mũsã said*: *"He says, Surely she is a cow not made submissive that she should plough the land, nor does she irrigate the tilth, sound, without a blemish in her." They said: "Now you have brought the truth;" so they sacrificed her, though they had not the mind to do* (it) (71). *And when you killed a man, then you disagreed with respect to that, and Allãh was to bring forth that which you were going to hide* (72). *So, We said*: "*Strike the* (dead body) *with part of the* (sacrificed cow)*", thus Allãh brings the dead to life, and He shows you His signs so that you may understand* (73). *Then your hearts hardened after that, so that they were like rocks, rather worse in hardness; and surely there are some rocks from which streams burst forth, and surely there are some of them which split asunder so water issues out of them, and surely there are some of them which fall down for fear of Allãh, and Allãh is not at all heedless of what you do* (74).

* * * * *

COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *And lifted the mountain over you*: "*aṭ-Ṭũr"* (الطُّوْرُ) is mountain; that is why has been substituted by *"al-jabal"* (اَلجَبَلُ = mountain) in verse: *And when We wrested away the*

mountain over them as if it were a covering overhead (7:171). "*an-Natq"* (اَلنَّتْقُ = to wrest away; to pull out). The verse at first mentions taking of a promise; and ends with the command to take hold of what they were given and to bear in mind what was in it; in between it refers to the lifting of the mountain over them, without saying why it was lifted. But the context clearly shows that it was done to frighten them without putting them under compulsion, in order that they might obey what they were told — if Allãh had wished to compel them, there was no need to take any promise before.

Objection: If we were to take the sentence, "and lifted the mountain over you", in its literal meaning, it would be a miraculous sign that would have forced the Israelites to obey the given command under duress and coercion; but Allãh says: *There is no compulsion in the religion* (2:256)*; . . . will you then force men till they become believers?* (10:99).

Reply: The objection is baseless. The sentence shows only that they were threatened and frightened. Just lifting the mountain over their head was not enough to coerce and force them to believe and obey. Otherwise, most of the miracles shown by Mũsã (a.s.) could be termed as "compulsion"! The said questioner has tried to explain away this sentence in this way: "The Israelites were at the foot of the mountain; it was shaken violently and during that convulsion its summit loomed over them, until they thought that it was going to fall over them. It is this natural phenomenon that has been described as pulling out the mountain and lifting it over them."

Such misinterpretations emanate from rejection of the principle of "miracle" altogether. We have already written in detail on this subject. If we were to explain away the verses of miracle in this way, no speech would remain safe from distortion; and no sentence could be taken to mean what it says; as a result, all the norms of eloquence and literature would lose their value.

QUR'ÃN: *so that you may guard* (against evil): "*La'alla"* (لَعَلَّ) is a particle meaning "perhaps" "may be"; it denotes hope — the speaker may be hoping for something, or the person spoken who gives rise to the hope, or the situation justifies the hope although the speaker or the listener does not feel optimistic himself. In any case, it implies some uncertainty about the final outcome. When this particle is used in a divine speech, it indicates hopefulness either with reference to the listener or in context of the situation; but it can never refer to the speaker, that is, Allãh, because He can never be uncertain of any result. It has clearly been explained by ar-Rãghib in his *al-Mufradãt.* There-fore, whenever this word is used in the Qur'ãn, it is translated as "so that . . .", "in order that . . ."

QUR'ÃN: *Be apes despised*: *"Khãsi'īn"* (خَاسِـئِيْنَ = despised, humiliated).

QUR'ÃN: *So We made them an example*: *"an-Nakã"*(اَلنَّكَالُ) means exemplary punishment meted out to one in order that others may desist from such transgression.

QUR'ÃN: *And when Mũsã said to his people*: *"Surely Allãh commands you that you should sacrifice a cow . . . "*: This is the story of the cow of the Israelites, and it is these verses which have given this chapter its name, the Cow.

The Qur'ãn has used a dramatic style for this story. It opens with the middle of the story (verses 67 to 71), followed by its beginning (verse 72) and ending with its conclusion (verse 73). Another thing to note is the changes of the pronouns — up to verse 66, the Israelites were directly addressed in second person; but verses 67 to 71 are addressed to the Prophet mentioning the Israelites in third person; then it reverts again to the original second person (verses 72 -73).

However, let us follow the narrative in the light of the

Qur'ãn. Allãh addresses the Prophet referring to the Israelites in third person: “And when Mũsã said to his people: ‘Surely Allãh commands you that you should sacrifice a cow’; they said . . . “ Obviously the order given to sacrifice a cow with subsequent description of its various characteristics and qualities, contained in these five verses (67-71), is like a parenthetic statement which clarifies the meaning of the next two verses (72-73), addressed to the Israelites: “And when you killed a man, then you disagreed with respect to that, and Allãh was to bring forth that which you were going to hide. So We said: ‘Strike the (dead body) with part of the (sacrificed cow),’ thus Allãh brings the dead to life, and He shows you His signs that you may understand.”

The five verses (67-71) also show how ill-mannered the Israelites were; how offensive their behaviour was towards their prophet. See how off-handedly they accused their prophet of speaking idle words, how arrogantly they made demand after demand of the Lord to make His command clear and plain, as though there was any ambiguity in the divine command or the prophetic utterance. Add to it their insulting mode of referring to God: Mũsã had told them, “ Surely Allãh commands you . . .”; but they repeatedly used the words, “Call on your Lord for our sake . . .”, as though He was not their Lord. Then again they went on repeating the demand to be told “what she is”, “what her colour is”; and when all was explained to them, they arrogantly claimed, “surely to us the cows are all alike”. It should be noted that they did not say that that particular cow seemed indistinct to them; they instead claimed that all the cows were alike in their eyes — implying that the cows *per se* were the same, and if a certain individual cow had some special quality, this much description was not enough for identification purpose; they did not realize that it was not the cow, but the divine will, which produced the desired result. They were given a simple command to sacrifice “a cow”, that is, any cow; they should have acted on that general unrestricted command, but they went on asking for more and more particulars; this was in

itself a height of arrogance.

Then, look at their rudeness in asking their prophet, “Do you ridicule us?” It cast an aspersion on the prophet that he was, God forbid, an ignorant person who talked aimlessly. That is why he vehemently defended himself saying, “I seek the protection of Allãh from being one of the ignorants”. Even then, they had the temerity to say at the end of the story, “Now you have brought the truth”, implying that the previous explanations were not “the truth”, that the preceding divine speech and prophetic messages were, God forbid, untruths!

This story is not mentioned in the current Torah. There-fore, it was better not to address it to the Israelites. This may be another reason of changing the mode of address — the story was initially addressed to the Prophet, and after establishing the base, the pronouns were again changed to the original second person directly addressing the Israelites. Nevertheless, the Torah contains an order that implies that some such events must have taken place:

“If one be found slain in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him: Then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain: And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn the yoke: And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley, which is neither eared nor sown, and shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley: And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them the Lord the God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord; and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried: And all the elders of that city, that are next unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley: And they shall answer and say: Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O

Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them." (Deut., 21:1-8)

It must now be clear that the story as given here is not intended as a simple narrative. The main theme is taken up in verse 72 (*And when you killed a man . . .*), but before that, a part of the story is narrated to the Prophet in some detail in verses 67-71 for obvious reasons.

Let us now recapitulate what has been explained above, The verses 67-71 (*And when Mũsã said to his people*: "*Surely Allãh commands you . . .*), addressed to the Prophet, is a prologue to the forthcoming episode (verses 72-73), although the listeners do not know it yet. As the audience does not know why the Israelites were told to sacrifice a cow, its curiosity is aroused and the suspense continues until the relation between the sacrifice of the cow and detection of the murderer is revealed. It was this apparent irrelevance of the former to the latter that prompted the Israelities to accuse Mũsã (a.s.) of ridiculing them, of joking with them. This accusation showed that they were completely devoid of discipline, were very arrogant and disobedient. They were not inclined to obey any command without knowing its why and wherefore. They were not ready to believe in that which they could not see — belief in the unseen was against their grain. They were the people who had said to Mũsã (a.s.):

"O Mũsã! we will not believe in you until we see Allãh manifestly" (2:55).

Their trouble was that they wanted total independence in every affair, no matter whether it was within their domain or not. They erroneously thought that the unseen could be brought down to the level of the seen. Consequently, they wanted to adopt a deity which they could see by their naked eyes: *They said*: "*O Mũsã! make for us a god as they have* (their) *gods." He said*: "*Surely you are a people acting ignorantly"* (7:138).

No wonder that they did not understand the sublime status of their prophet Mũsã (a.s.) and thought that he, like themselves, followed his own desires and joked with, and ridiculed, the people. They accused him of joking and acting like ignorant ones. And Mũsã (a.s.) had to refute this charge: "I seek the protection of Allãh from being one of the ignorants". Why did Mũsã (a.s.) seek the protection of Allãh? Why did not he say straight away that he was not an ignorant person? It was because Mũsã (a.s.) preferred to rely on the divine protection which cannot fail, rather than on his own virtues.

The Israelites believed that one should not accept anything without proof. This principle is correct, of course. But they were mistaken in believing that man must know the reason of every order in full detail; that a command of general nature was not enough. That is why they went on asking for more and more detail about the cow they were told to slaughter. They thought that the cow, by its nature, could not bring a dead body to life; if somewhere there was a particular cow possessing this unheard of quality, it should be pin-pointed with accurate and detailed description. It was this trend of thought which prompted them to say: "Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is". They unnecessarily put themselves into a corner; and Allãh, on this uncalled for demand, gave them a few particulars; "Mũsã said: 'He says, Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age (i.e. not passed the calf-bearing age) nor too young (i.e. not virgin, nor one that has not given birth to a calf yet) of middle age between that (and this)." "*al-'Awãn* " (الْعَوَانُ) means a female in middle of child-bearing age. Then their Lord took mercy on them and admonished them not to indulge in too much questioning, and to be content with that which they were told: "do therefore what you are commanded". But they did not listen to the divine advice and said: " 'Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what her colour is.' Mũsã said: 'He says, Surely she is a yellow cow, her colour is intensely

yellow, giving delight to the beholders.' " This much explanation should have been enough for them, as by then the cow's age and colour had been described to them. But no, it was not enough for the Israelites who unhesitatingly repeated their first question, shamelessly accusing Mũsã — and God too — of not giving them clear description as yet: "They said: 'Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allãh please we shall surely be guided aright.' "So, Allãh further particularized her nature and characteristics, saying: "Surely she is a cow not made submissive that she should plough land, nor does she irrigate the tilth"; and then He put a further restriction about her colour, "sound, without a blemish in her." Now that they were given all the details and could not think of any more questions, they said: "Now you have brought the truth." The sentence shows that they had to accept the command because they could not think of any more excuses to avoid it — but even then they put the blame of their previous disobedience on Mũsã — and by implication on Allãh: that they had not complied with the order before because Mũsã (a.s.) and Allãh had not explained it correctly. All this is implied in the last clause, "so they sacrificed her, though they had not the mind to do (it)."

QUR'ÃN: *And when you killed a man. . . .*: It is the beginning of the main story. "*at-Taḍaru'* " (التَّدَارُءُ = translated here as disagreed") is derived form *ad-dar'* (اَلدَّرْءُ = repulse) and literally means to push one another. A man was killed and every group was disowning its responsibility, putting the blame on others. But Allãh was to disclose what they wanted to hide.

QUR'ÃN: *So We said*: "*Strike the* (dead body) *with part of the* (sacrificed cow)": The Arabic text contains two pronouns — the first (masculine) refers to the dead body and the second (feminine) to the cow. The translation omits the pronouns replacing them with the nouns they stand for.

Someone has denied the actuality of this story, suggesting that the verses simply describe the promulgation of a law (as given in the Deut., 21:1-8, quoted above). According to him, raising someone from the dead (mentioned in these verses) merely means finding out the identity of the killer — as Allãh says: *And there is life for you in* (the law of) *retaliation* (2:179). In short, he claims that there was no miracle involved, nor was there any dead body brought back to life. But the context of the story leaves no room for such misinterpretation — especially if we look at the words, "So We said: 'Strike the (dead body) with part of the (sacrificed cow)', thus Allãh brings the dead to life."

QUR'ÃN: *Then your hearts hardened after that, so that they were like rocks, rather worse in hardness*: "*al-Qaswah*" (الْقَسْوَةُ = sternness) in heart is like "hardness" in rock. "Aw" (أَوْ = or) is used here in the meaning of *bal* (بَلْ = rather). The next sentences show why their hearts were worse than rocks in hardness: "and surely there are some rocks from which streams burst forth". The sentence offers a contrast between rocks and water. Rocks are used as examples of hardness, while water is proverbialy used to denote softness. Even then, there are some rocks — with all their hardness — from which streams of water — with all its softness — burst forth; "and surely there are some of them which split asunder so water issues out of them". The hard rocks send forth the soft waters; but the Israelites' hearts were so hard as never to allow any truth to issue out of them.

QUR'ÃN: *and surely there are some of them which fall down for fear of Allãh*: We see how the rocks and stones fall down — big rocks on the summits of mountains crack up, and then an ordinary earthquake is enough to dislodge them causing an avalanche. Also, the cracks fill up with ice and snow during winter, then the warmth of spring melts the ice sending the streams down the valleys. This phenomenon is related to its

natural causes, yet Allãh says that the rocks fall down from fear of Allãh. Why? Because all the natural causes ultimately return to the First Cause, that is, Allãh. Rocks, when they fall down because of the natural causes, are in fact obeying the divine decree which put them under the influence of those secondary causes. It may, therefore, be said that they understand the command of their Lord — an under-standing that is created nature. They obey the decree of Allãh inasmuch as they are thus moulded by Him. Allãh says: *and there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification* (17:44)*; all are obedient to Him* (2:116). Fear too is based on perception, as are the glorifying and the obeying. It may therefore be said that the rocks fall down for fear of Allãh. This sentence is of the same genre as the following ones: *And the thunder declares His glory with His praise, and the angels too for awe of Him* (13:13); *And whoever is in the heavens and the earth makes obe'Isãnce to Allãh only, willingly and unwillingly, and their shadows too at morn and eve* (13:15). Here the sound of thunder has been counted as the declaration of divine glory and the shadow is said to prostrate for Allãh. There are many verses of the same style and all are based on the same analysis as mentioned above.

However, the sentence, "and surely there are some of them which fall down for fear of Allãh", further shows how the Jews' hearts were worse than rocks in hardness: The rocks are afraid of Allãh and do fall down for His fear, but there is no fear of Allãh in the Jews' hearts, they are not afraid of divine wrath.

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) was asked about the words of Allãh: *Take hold of what We have given you with firmness,* whether it meant the strength of the bodies or the firm resolution of the heart. He (a.s.) said: "Both together" (*al-Mahasin*).

The author says: This tradition has also been narrated by al-‘Ayyãshi in his *at-Tafsīr.*

al-Ḥalabī narrates in explanation of the words of Allãh; *and bear in mind what is in it,* that he said: “Bear in mind what is in it and also bear in mind the chastisement that is laid down for its negligence.” (al-‘Ayyãshi)

The author says: It has been inferred from the position of this clause — it follows the threat implied in lifting the mountain over them.

Abũ Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allãh (s.a.w.a.) said: “If the children of Israel had not said: *and if Allãh please we shall surely be guided aright,* they would have never been given (respite). And had they (in the beginning) taken any cow and slaughtered her, it would have been enough for them; but they went on pressing (for more and more particulars), so Allãh made it harder (and harder) for them.” (*ad-Durru 'l-manthũr*)

Ibn Faḍḍãl said: “I heard Abu 'l-Ḥasan (a.s.) saying: ‘Surely Allãh ordered the children of Israel to slaughter a cow — and what they needed was its tail. (But they asked for more and more details) so Allãh made it harder (and harder) for them.’ “(*at-Tafsīr,* al-Qummi)

al-Bazanṭi said: “I heard ar-Riḍã (a.s.) saying: ‘A man from the children of Israel killed one of his relatives, then he took the body and put it in the path (leading) to the best of the Israelities' clans. Thereafter he came demanding (the revenge of) his blood. Mũsã (a.s.) was informed that such and such a clan had killed such and such a man, and he was asked to tell them who the killer was. Mũsã said: “Bring me a cow.” They said: “*Do you ridicule us?”* He said: “*I seek the protection of Allãh from being one of the ignorants.*” And had they taken any cow, it would have been enough for them, but they

pressed (for more particulars); therefore Allãh made it harder for them. *They said*: "*Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is". Mũsã said*: "*He says, Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age nor too young, of middle age between that* (and this)". Even then, if they had taken any cow (fitting this description) it would have been enough. But they pressed for more, so Allãh made it harder for them. *They said*: "*Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what her colour is*" *Mũsã said*: "*He says, Surely she is a yellow cow; her colour is intensely yellow, giving delight to the beholders*". Even then if they had taken any such cow, it would have been enough for them. But they persisted (in asking for more details) and Allãh made it even harder for them. *They said*: "*Call on your Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allãh please we shall surely be guided aright". He said*: "*He says, Surely she is a cow not made submissive that she should plough the land, nor does she irrigate the filth, sound, without a blemish in her." They said*: "*Now you have brought the truth*". They began their search and found such a cow with an Israelite youth. He said: "I shall not sell it but for a hide full of gold." Thereupon they came to Mũsã and informed him. He told them to buy it. So they bought and brought it. And *Mũsã* ordered it to be slaughtered. Then he ordered them to strike the dead body with its tail. As soon as they did so, the murdered man rose from the dead, and said: "O messenger of Allãh! Surely it is my cousin who had killed me, and not the man against whom he has lodged his claim." In this way, they knew who the killer was. Thereafter, a companion of the messenger of Allãh, *Mũsã,* said to him: "There is a story behind this cow". He asked: "And what is it?" He said: "(That) Israelite youth was very devoted to his father. And he purchased some goods, and came to his father (who was asleep) and keys were under his head. And he did not like to awaken his father, and cancelled the deal.

When his father woke up, he told him about it. The father said to him: 'Well done! Take this cow; it is a recompense for what you have lost.' "The messenger of Allãh, Mũsã, said to him: "Look at the faithfulness and good deed, where does it take its people to?" ' "

The author says: The traditions perfectly fit the description which we inferred from the verses.

A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE ABOUT MAKING THE DEAD BODIES ALIVE AND ABOUT METAMORPHOSIS

This chapter describes several miraculous signs in the stories of the Israelites and the others — for example, parting the sea and drowning the followers of Pharaoh (*And when We parted the sea for you, so We saved you and drowned the followers of Pharaoh . . .*); giving death to the Israelites by thunder-bolt and then raising them again from dead (*And when you said*: "*O Mũsã! we will not believe in you . . .*"); making the clouds to give shade over them and sending for them manna and quails (*And We made the clouds to give shade over you . . .*); making the streams to gush out from the rock (*And when Mũsã prayed for drink . . .*); lifting the mountain over them (. . . *and lifted the mountains over you . . .*); transforming some of them into apes (. . . *so We said to them*: "*Be apes. . .* ") and bringing a dead body back to life by hitting it with a part of a slaughtered cow (*So We said*: "*Strike the* [dead body] *with part of the* [sacrificed *cow . . .*]"). Among the non-Israelites, there are many stories of dead men and/ or animals brought back to life — for example, a large group that had fled their homes for fear of death (*Did you not see those who went forth from their homes . . .*); a chosen servant of Allãh who passed by a ruined town (*Or like*

him who passed by a town and it had fallen down upon its roofs . . .) and the birds which were raised from dead through the agency of Ibrãhīm (*And when Ibrãhīm said*: "*My Lord! show me how Thou givest life to the dead . . .*). Altogether, there are twelve miracles, most of them occurring among the Israelites. The Qur'ãn has narrated them; and we have already shown that miracles do occur, and super-natural events do take place. We have also shown that such happenings are not in conflict with the system of the cause and effect. It was clearly proved that it is not justified to interpret the verses of miracle in such a way as to deny their apparent meanings. Of course, the miracle is not related to an inherently impossible proposition, like dividing three in two equal wholes, or birth of a child that would be his own father. But if something is possible in itself and the Qur'ãn says that it did happen, one should not try to explain it away as an allegory or a metaphor.

However, some miracles, like raising someone from dead and transformation, that is, metamorphosis, require a somewhat detailed study because they are sometimes criticized from philosophical point of view.

Objection: It is an accepted fact that if an existent thing, a being, having a potentiality of perfection, converts it into actuality, then it is impossible for it to retrace its steps and turn that actuality back into the same potentiality. Likewise, a more perfect being does not change, in its forward march, to a less perfect one.

When a man dies, his soul is released from the fetters of matter; he becomes an immaterial "idea" or a spiritual being. Both these stages are above the matter; the existence in these planes is much more stronger than that in the material sphere.

Therefore, it is impossible for a soul — once death has separated it from the body — to re-establish its connection with that material body. Otherwise, it would mean that a thing,

having converted its potentiality into actuality, again retrogressed to the same potentiality — and as we have explained above it is not possible.

Also, man is on a higher level of existence than that of the animals. Therefore, it would be impossible for a man to change, by metamorphosis, into an animal.

Reply: Accepted that once a potentiality is turned into reality it cannot be regressed to the self-same potentiality. But raising someone from dead in this world, as well as metamorphosis, is outside the domain of this law.

Perception and reason show that a vegetable substance, when consumed by an animal, proceeds to its ultimate perfection, that is, animality, and takes the animal form. This form in itself is an incorporeal and immaterial thing. Having reached this stage, the vegetable has turned its potentiality into actuality. Now it cannot turn back to vegetable kingdom.

The animality is the fountain-head of the animal's conscious actions and perceptions. When it performs a deed an impression is outlined on its psyche. When it indulges in the same activity over and over again, that impression gets deeper and deeper until it becomes an ineradicable trait. This new trait may become the building block of an animal species with pronounced characteristics; for example, the fox with its cunning, the pig with its lascivious lust, the panther with its predatory stalking. If, on the other hand, it fails to acquire any characteristics, the psyche remains at its original level of simple animality. It is like the case of a vegetable which fails to reach the threshold of animality and remains at the original level of vegetable-kingdom.

Likewise, an animal, becoming a part of a human being, progresses forward on the path of humanity. A human being has the capacity of perceiving his self in absolute incorporeal terms. When it thus changes its potentiality to this actuality, it is impossible for it to go back to the self-same potentiality. The humanity too, by repeatedly doing a certain type of deed,

acquires especial traits and characteristics — and it creates various kinds of human beings with their particular properties in the same way as happens in animal kingdom.

Now, let us suppose that a dead man was returned to life in this world, and his soul re-established its relation to the matter, that is, the body. Obviously, it would not affect the incorporeality of the soul — it was incorporeal in the first life, remained so after that connection was severed, and would remain in this second life too. Body is the tool by which the soul carries on its material and intellectual activities, just as an artisan makes articles with the help of his tools and equipments. When the man died, the soul lost that tool; when he was revived the soul regained the possession and control of that tool. Now, it may use that tool to acquire new talents, to attain to a higher level of perfection than before. It cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be said to be a retrogression or a retreat from perfection to imperfection, nor is it a change from reality to potentiality.

Objection: The scenario given above entails perpetual compulsion, which is obviously a false and void proposition. An incorporeal and immaterial soul, separated by death from the body, does not have any more potentials of acquiring further perfection through re-establishment of its relation to the body. Remember that only a negligible number of people are claimed to have risen from the dead. And the multitude of human beings remain unrevived. If it were in their nature to acquire new perfections through re-establishing their link with their bodies and - yet they were denied that opportunity, they would be perpetually deprived of what their nature demanded. And this perpetual deprivation is nothing but perpetual compulsion.

Reply: There is no compulsion involved here at all. The soul has already progressed from its potentiality to the actuality. It reached a certain level and died. Now, at present it does not have any more potentiality. It will continue to possess the actuality it has already acquired. Let us suppose that there is a

man who did some good and some bad deeds, and then died. Had he remained alive he could have added to his deeds and acquired a somewhat different spiritual form, either lovelier or uglier than before. Likewise, if he is returned to life, he may acquire better or worse traits than before. But if he is not revived, then he already owns his actuality, and will accordingly be re-warded or punished in al-Barzakh, until he acquires a spiritual form according to his earned qualities. Even then, if he is returned to this world, he would get new potentiality for spiritual perfection, and may acquire another spiritual form by using the material tool, for example, his body. But, if he is not returned, there is neither any potentiality nor any question of compulsion, perpetual or otherwise.

We should not forget that mere deprivation of a possible perfection is not a compulsion. Otherwise, every happening in this world could be called a perpetual compulsion. Every event, every development here affects each and every thing of the universe, directly or indirectly. There is a never-ending struggle and conflict going on in the universe; and it affects the whole system — including the ability of a man to fully attain to his perfection. That effect may be beneficial or harmful. But nobody claims that because he was prevented, by the circumstances beyond his control, from obtaining a possible benefit, he was under perpetual compulsion.

If a talent for a certain perfection is ingrained in someone's nature and then he is prevented from achieving it, either by some factors in his own nature or some external forces bent on nullifying that talent, then only it may be called a perpetual compulsion — because in this case, putting that talent or potentiality in that species be a vain thing, an aimless venture.

Now we come to metamorphosis. If a man's figure is trans-formed to that of a pig or an ape, it is just an external change. He is still a man in the form of an animal; not that his humanity was erased and replaced by the nature of pig or ape. We have already described that when one repeatedly carries on

an activity, its impression is etched on one's psyche. When a man repeatedly indulges in debauchery, his psyche turns into that of a pig; and it is not impossible for that figure to appear in his facial features in this world too — as it would certainly appear in the next world. Such a man is still a man, albeit a transformed one; not that he has lost his humanity.

By the way, we sometimes read, in the newspapers and magazines, reports of academic conferences in Europe and America that tend to prove that it is possible to revive a man after his death, and that a man's facial figures may change to something else. Of course, we do not base over belief on such news and reports; nevertheless, we expect our adversaries not to forget today what they had read yesterday.

Poser: Then there is no difficulty in believing in transmigration of the souls.

Reply: There is a world of difference between metamorphosis and transmigration of the souls. In metamorphosis the same body changes its figure to look like something else; while the believers in transmigration of the souls say that a soul, after attaining its perfection and leaving the body, establishes a new connection with a new body. Obviously, it is an impossible proposition. A question may be asked whether or not the new body was already connected to a soul of its own. If it already belonged to another soul, it would entail domination of one body by two souls, which is impossible — two persons cannot have one body, nor can one body be governed by two personalities. If, on the other hand, the body did not have a soul already, it would mean that an accomplished and developed soul was burdened by an unaccomplished and undeveloped body. It would certainly be a regression from actuality to potentiality — just like returning a wise old man to his infancy! And this too is impossible.

Also, it should be apparent from what we have explained that it is certainly impossible for a human soul, after leaving its human body, to be incarnated in a vegetable or animal body. In short, the belief in transmigration of the souls entails impossibility after impossibility.

AN ACADEMIC AND ETHICAL DISCOURSE ON UNQUESTIONING ADOPTION OF CONCEPTS AND RULINGS

The nation, most frequently described in the Qur'ãn, is that of the Israelites; and the prophet most numerously referred to therein is their prophet, Mũsã (a. s.) , son of ‘Imrãn. His name has been mentioned in one hundred and thirty six places, twice as many as the second most numerously mentioned name, that is, of Ibrãhīm (a.s.), who has been named sixty-nine times only — as some people have calculated.[1]

It is not difficult to understand the reason for these frequent references. Islam, the true religion, is based on the belief of monotheism; its present foundation was laid by Ibrãhīm (a.s.); and Allãh completed and perfected it for His Prophet, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), as He says: . . . *the faith of your father Ibrãhīm; He named you Muslims before and in this . . .* (22:78). And the Israelites were the most disputatious and most quarrelsome of all the nations; they were the most obstinate and most abstruse of all when there was a question of submitting to the truth. And the heathens of Arabia, whom the Prophet of Islam had to contend with, were of the same mould, so much so that Allãh said to His Prophet: *Surely those who disbelieve alike is to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not believe* (2:6) .

Every vice, every depravity found in the Israelites could be found in them; they, in their hard-heartedness and impertinence were the mirror-image of the Israelites.

Ponder over the stories of the Israelites, as narrated in the Qur'ãn; look at the picture of their characters and morals as it emerges from those narratives. You will find a nation deeply

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1. Vide *al-Mu‘jamu 'l-mufahras,* by Muhammad Fu'ãd ‘Abdu'l-Bãqi.

submerged in sensualism and materialism. They did not believe in what was beyond the reach of their external senses; for them spiritual happiness was a word without meaning; their only ambition was the pursuit of sensual pleasure; their eyes could not focus on intellectual progress or spiritual perfection, so their only aim in life was the material development. And to this day, they have not changed a whit. It was this tendency which made their mind and will totally subservient to the matter and the material phenomena. They did not understand except that which they could see, hear, touch, taste or smell; they did not strive but for some tangible and material goals. Their servitude to the sensual phenomena prevented them from accepting any thing outside the domain of the five senses — even if it was truth; their thraldom to matter encouraged them to accept every thing told by their materially advanced big bosses — even if it was false. It created a clear contrariety and inconsistency in their words and deeds. They condemned every adoption of others' concepts, ridiculing it as blind following, if that concept was unperceivable by the external senses — no matter how correct it was. And at the same time, they appreciated every adoption of others' concepts, label-ling it as the pleasure of life, if it conformed with their material base desires — no matter how wrong that concept was. This trait became deeply rooted in their psyche during their long sojourn in Egypt, where the Egyptians humiliated them, enslaved them and castigated them; they subjected them to severe torment, killed their sons sparing their daughters, and in this was a great trial for them from their Lord.

However, it was this deep-rooted trait which made them heedless to what their prophets and divine scholars told them about what was good for them in this life as well as in the hereafter. (Remember their disputations with Mũsã and others!) And these very people were ever ready to accept and follow what their big bosses called them to, for gratification of their worldly desires.

Today the truth and reality has been afflicted by this very tragedy. The modern civilization, presented to the humanity by the western world, is likewise based on sensual perception and material outlook. It is not prepared to accept any proof for something which is not perceivable by the external senses; and does not ask for any proof of validity, if a thing gives material and sensual pleasure. This has resulted in weakening of the hold of human instincts, and in disappearance of deep knowledge and high morals from our society. This trait has exposed the edifice of humanity to ruin, and is confronting the society with chaos and disorder. And you will surely see its real face in a not too distant future.

Actually, not every proof is asked for, nor every unquestioning adoption of others' ideas and concepts is objectionable. Man proceeds on the road of perfection through his intentional activities. His actions emanate from his will, and the will springs from thought and notion. Thinking, therefore, is the foundation of his perfection. Man depends on practical or intellectual cognition to which his perfection is directly or indirectly related. This cognition creates in his mind the need for individual or collective actions; this knowledge leads to intention and will which produces the desired activity.

Man, by his instinct, tries to find out the cause of every event, happening inside or outside his self. He does not do any action without knowing its reason; he does not accept any theory without ascertaining its proof. It is his unfailing trait; he always looks for the cause of the events and actions; it is his nature and the nature never deviates from its set course.

But this trait puts an unbearable burden on him. No individual can accomplish all the academic and practical processes required for his material and spiritual well-being. It is this burden which led the man to establish a society and cooperate with other human beings. Various people were given

responsibilites to per-form various tasks, in order that the society, taken as a whole, might collectively accomplish all tasks, and fulfil all the needs of all its members put together.

Human needs are expanding by leaps and bounds; various branches of knowledge — sciences, technologies, arts etc. — are growing larger and larger, to such an extent that every subject has grown into hundreds of subjects — each requiring its own specialists. Look for example, at medical science. In old days it was a branch of physics; now it has branched out into hundreds of independent subjects, and no single physician or surgeon may gain expertise in more than one or two of them.

This vast multitude of special fields has instinctively led man to limit his inquiry for cause, and his search for proof, to only those branches of knowledge in which he has gained some expertise; and accept and follow the verdicts of other specialists in other fields. A sane person invariably always relies on the experts in the fields of their expertise. The confidence in their expertise creates a certainty that what has been said or done is correct; and this serves as the proof demanded by human nature.

The nature dictates that man should try his best to find out the detailed proof of the rightness of his idea and action in the fields of his speciality; and as a corollary it directs that he should unquestioningly accept the concepts and verdicts of others in other fields. In short, an ignorant man should follow the decree of a learned one. It is impossible for one man to be an expert in all the branches of knowledge, or independent in all the activities necessary for his life and well-being. Therefore, it is impossible for any man to be free from blindly following a lot of experts in numerous avenues of life. Anyone claiming contrary to this, is a fool.

Of course, it is a shame if a man remains content with un-questioning following, even where he can form an independentopinion based on detailed knowlege; as it is a shame if he forms independent opinion without acquiring

necessary knowledge. Both trends are undesirable, both are ruinous to a healthy civilization, both are dangerous to the society.

It is the prerogative of Allãh that His decrees and orders be followed without any questioning, without any if or but; because He is the First and Final cause, an no other cause or reason is needed when He has spoken.

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أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ
كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ـــ ٧٥. وَإِذَا
لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا
أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا
تَعْقِلُونَ ـــ ٧٦ . أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا
يُعْلِنُونَ ـــ ٧٧ . وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ
هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ـــ ٧٨ . فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ
يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ـــ ٧٩ . وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا
مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ
عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ـــ ٨٠ . بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ
خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ـــ ٨١. وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ـــ ٨٢ .

Do you then hope that they would believe in you? While a party from among them indeed used to hear the word of Allãh, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this) (75). *And when they meet those who believe they say: "We believe"; and when they are alone one with another they say: "Do you talk to them of what Allãh has disclosed to you that they may argue with you by this before your Lord? Do you not then understand?"* (76). *What! Do they not know that Allãh knows what they conceal and what they proclaim?* (77). *And there are among them illiterates who know not the Book but only lies, and they do but conjecture* (78). *Woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands and then say: "This is from Allãh", so that they may sell it for a small price; therefore woe to them for what ¯their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn* (thereby) (79). *And they say: "Fire shall not touch us but for a few days." Say: "Have you taken a promise from Allãh, then Allãh will never fail to keep His promise, or do you speak against Allãh what you do not know?"* (80). *Yea! whoever earns evil and his sins beset him on every side, these are the inmates of the Fire; in it they shall abide* (81). *And (as* for) *those who believe and do good deeds, these are the dwellers of the garden; in it they shall abide* (82).

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COMMENTARY

The context shows that the unbelievers, and especially those of Medina, thought that the Jews were the likeliest people to help and support the Apostle of Allãh at

his advent. The pagan tribes of Aws and Khazraj lived with the Jews of Medina, and they knew that the latter followed a divine religion and a revealed book. Thus it was not too much to expect them to believe in the latest in the series of divine religions and books.

This was the basis of their hope that the Jews would accept the Apostle of Allãh as the true prophet, and would strengthen the cause of religion, and actively participate in the propagation of truth. But no sooner did the Prophet migrate to Medina than the Jews showed their latent hostility. The hope was shattered and the expectation turned to disappointment. That is why Allãh addresses the believers, saying: "Do you then hope that they would believe in you?" Concealment of truth and alteration of divine words was their deep-rooted life-pattern. Why wonder if they go back on what they used to say before the advent of Islãm?

QUR'ÃN: *Do you then hope. . . and they know this:* The speech is now addressed to the Prophet and the believers, referring to the Jews in third person. This same style was used in the preceding story of the Cow, because the Jews had omitted the event from the Torah. These verses continue that mode of address because it exposes their habit of altering and manipulating the divine book.

QUR'ÃN: *And when they meet those who believe. . . and what they proclaim:* The two conditional clauses, "when they meet those who believe" and "when they are alone one with another" are not in opposition to each other — as were the clauses in the verse: *And when they meet those who believe, they say: "We believe"; and when they are alone with their Satans, they say: "Surely we are with you, we were only mocking* (2:14). Here the two clauses simply describe two instances of the Jews' transgressions and ignorance:

First: They indulge in hypocrisy, showing that they have

accepted Islãm, and trying in this way to protect themselves from trouble, ridicule and even death.

Second: They want to deceive Allãh, forgetting that He is the Knower of the seen and the unseen, Aware of what they conceal and what they proclaim.

We may infer from the verses that the Jewish laity in Medina sometimes talked openly with the believers, telling them of some of the foretellings about the Prophet or giving them some information that proved the truth of Islãm and its Prophet.

But their leaders used to admonish them for it, telling them that it was a thing revealed to them, it should not be disclosed to the believers, lest they argued with the Jews before the Lord — as though if the believers did not argue with them before God, He would not know of it! Such thinking implies that Allãh knew only the apparent, not the hidden and concealed things or thoughts. Allãh refuted this foolish idea and said: "What! Do they not know that Allãh knows what they conceal and what they proclaim?" It is our, and not God's, knowledge which is limited to the seen and does not comprehend the unseen, because our perception depends on the senses which in their turn depend on body organs — equipped with nervous instruments, surrounded by space and time, influenced by a hundred other material causes.

This talk also throws light on the materialistic outlook of the Israelites. They were so steeped in that belief that they applied the human limitations to God too. They thought that God was present and active inside the matter and prevailed over it. But that presence and that control and management were based on the same principles as a material cause brings out and controls a material effect. Such a belief was not a speciality of the Jews; it was and is held even by those followers of Islãm who believe in fundamentality of matter. For these people, God's life, know-ledge, power, choice, will, decree, order and management have the same meanings as do their own life, knowledge etc. It is a disease for which there is no cure. And

the signs and warnings can avail nothing to a people who do not understand. Such views have made Islãm a laughing-stock in the eyes of those who have no access to the true faith and correct Islãmic knowledge. Those detractors say: The Muslims ascribe to their Prophet the saying, "Allãh created Adam in His likeness"; and these followers of the Prophet have created a god in the likeness of Adam. One group of the Muslims ascribes to its Lord all the qualities of the matter. Another group does not understand anything of God's beautiful attributes; consequently it reduces all divine attributes to negatives. It says that the names and adjectives, which are used for both God and His creatures, have quite different meanings in both cases. When we say, "God is Existent, Knowing, Powerful and Alive", the words denote some divine qualities totally incomprehensible to us, completely different from the meanings they have when they are applied to a human being. Therefore, it is necessary to reduce these words to their negatives. What the above sentence, for example, means is this: "God is not non-existent, not unaware, not powerless and not lifeless." Such explanation implies that they believe in that which they do not understand, worship that which they are uncertain about and invite others to believe in that which neither they nor anyone else knows anything about.

The word of truth is enough to dispel such falsehoods. The people have been admonished by the true religion to hold fast to the essence of reality and steer clear between the above-mentioned two extremes. They should know that Allãh is not like His creatures, nor is He a set of negative propositions. The true religion directs common people to believe that Allãh is a thing, unlike other things; that He has knowledge, unlike our knowledge; power, unlike our power; and will, not produced by contemplation; that He talks, not with a mouth; and hears, not with ears. As for the people of higher understanding, they must ponder on His signs and acquire deep knowledge of His religion. He has said: *Say: "Are those who know and those who do not know alike?"*

Only those possessed of understanding shall bear in mind (39:9). The people of higher understanding are not equal to a common man in their knowledge of truth and religion; likewise, the two are not alike in their respective responsibilities. This, therefore, is the teaching of religion for both groups respectively; it is there for them to follow, would they do so?

QUR'ÃN: *And there are among them illiterates who know not the Book but only lies and they do but conjecture; "al-Ummiyy"* (الأمّيُّ = one who does not read or write) is related to *"al-umm"* (اَلأمُّ = mother) . It is as though the excessive love of the mother prevented her from entrusting her child to a teacher to teach and train him; consequently he could learn only from his mother. *"al-Amaniyy"* (الأمَانِيُّ) is plural of "*al-umniyyah"* (اَلأمْنِيَّةُ = lie). The verse says that some of the Jews were literates who didread and write the book — but making alterations in it; and the rest were illiterates who knew nothing of the book except the lies of the former group.

QUR'ÃN: Woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands. . . : "al-Wayl" (اَلوَيْلُ = woe, disaster, severe punishment, adversity, affliction) ; "al-ishtira' " (اَلاشتِرَاءُ = to sell) .

QUR'ÃN: *therefore, woe to them for what their hands have written . . .:* The pronouns may refer either to all Jews or only to the interpolators among them. If the former view is taken then the woe and condemnation would cover the illiterates too.

QUR'ÃN: Yea! whoever earns evil and his sins beset him on every side . . . : "*al-Khaṭī'ah*" (اَلخَطِيئَةُ = translated here as "sins") actually refers to the psychical condition resulting from evil-doing. That is why the verse speaks first of his evil-doing and then of the effects of the sins besetting him on every side. When he is beset by his sins on every side, there should remain

no opening for the guidance to reach him; he, therefore, will go to Hell and abide there forever.

Had there been an iota of faith in his heart, or some good traits like justice in his character, it would have been possible for the rays of guidance to penetrate to him. The overwhelming besetting of sins on every side, therefore, is possible in case of polytheism, as Allãh says: *Surely Allãh does not forgive that anything should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases* (4:48) ; and also in case of disbelief and denial of the divine signs, Allãh says: *And* (as to) *those who disbelieve in and belie Our signs, they are the inmates of the Fire, in it they shall abide* (2:39). In short, the earning of evil and being beset by sins on all sides is a broad expression covering all that would make one to abide in the Hell forever.

The two verses under discussion are almost similar to the verse: *Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabaeans, whoever believes in Allãh and the Last Day and does good, they shall have their reward* . . . (2:62).

Both show that the basis of salvation and eternal happiness is the true belief and good deeds. The only difference between the two sets of the verses is that the verse 2:62 shows that mere taking to oneself nomenclatures like the Muslim, the Jew etc. is of no use; while the verses under discussion show that mere claiming of salvation is of no worth at all.

TRADITIONS

al-Bãqir (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh, *And when they meet those who believe* . . .: “Some of the Jews (who were not inimical to the Muslims and were not a party to the Jewish conspiracy against them), on meeting the Muslims, used to narrate what the Torah contained of the description of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) ; so their elders forbade them to do so

and said: 'Do not in-form them of what the Torah contains of the attributes of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.), lest they argue with you by that before your Lord.' Thereupon, this verse was revealed." (*Majma`u 'l- bayãn*)

It is narrated from the fifth or the sixth Imãm that he said about the words of Allãh, *Yea! whoever earns evil. . .*: "If they deny the *wilãyah* (اَلْوِلايَةُ = friendship, overlordship) of the Leader of the faithful, then they are the inmates of the Fire, in it they shall abide." (*al-Kãfī*)

The author says: ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī has narrated in his *al-Amãlī* a tradition of nearly the same theme. The two traditions are based on the principle of the "flow" of the Qur'ãn and fit the verse on one of its best example. Allãh has counted the love of, and submission to, the Prophet's family-members as a good deed, as He says: *Say: "I do not ask of you any recompense for it except the love for* (my) *near relatives; and whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein* (42:23). Also, the tradition may be taken as another explanation of the verse, as we shall describe in the Chapter 6 (The Table) that "the good" means complying with the demands of the belief of monotheism. If so, then the tradition particularly mentions `Ali (a.s.) because he was the first of this *ummah* to open this door.

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وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ
إِحْسَاناً ، وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْناً
وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَوٰةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلاً مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ
مُعْرِضُونَ ـــ ٨٣ . وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا
تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ
ـــ ٨٤ . ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقاً
مِنْكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ
يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَارَىٰ تُفَادُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ
أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ
يَفْعَلُ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَوٰةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَٰمَةِ يُرَدُّونَ
إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ـــ ٨٥ . أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ
اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيَوٰةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ
يُنْصَرُونَ ـــ ٨٦ . وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ
وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا
جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنْفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقاً كَذَّبْتُمْ
وَفَرِيقاً تَقْتُلُونَ ـــ ٨٧ . وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللهُ
بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلاً مَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ـــ ٨٨ .

And when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: "You shall not worship (any) but Allãh and (you shall do) *good to (your) parents, and to the near of kin and to the orphans and the needy, and speak to men good (words) and keep up prayer and pay the zakãt. "Then you turned back except a few of you and* (now too) *you turn aside (83). And when We made a covenant with you: "You shall not shed your blood and you shall not turn your people out of your cities;" then you gave a promise while you witnessed (84). Yet you it is who slay your people and turn a party from among you out of their homes, backing each other up against them unlawfully and exceeding the limits; and if they should come to you as captives, you would ransom them — while their very turning out was unlawful for you. Do you then - believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in the other? What then is the reward of such among you as do this but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the Day of Resurrection they shall be sent back to the most grievous chastisement, and Allãh is not at all heedless of what you do (85). These are they who have bought the life of this world for the hereafter, so their chastisement shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped (86). And most certainly We gave Mũsã the Book and We sent apostles after him one after another; and We gave 'Isa, the son of Maryam, clear evidence and strengthened him with the holy spirit. What! whenever then an apostle came to you with that which your souls did not desire, you were insolent, so you called some* (of them) *liars and some you slew (87). And they say: "Our hearts are covered." Nay, Allãh has cursed them on account of their unbelief; so little it is that they believe (88).*

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COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *And when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: "You shall not worship (any) but Allãh . . .":* To begin with, the verse refers to the Children of Israel in third person, and then ends by addressing them in second person, "Then you turned back . . ." The first sentence mentions making a covenant with them — which must naturally be in words — then describes that covenant; this in its turn begins with a declarative sentence, "You shall not worship (any) but Allãh", and ends up with some imperative ones, "and speak to men good words . . ." When the stories of the Israelites began, they were addressed in second person, because the verses contained a lot of admonition and reprimand; it continued to the story of the Cow when, because of demands of eloquence, it was changed to third person. Consequently, this verse too began with third person, but when time came to quote the verbal covenant, the style reverted to the second person.

"You shall not worship (any) but Allãh": It is a prohibition in the form of an information. This style shows the utmost importance attached to the ban by the speaker — it is as though the speaker has no doubt whatsoever that the order shall be complied with, and that, in this case, the servants will not dare to go near idolatory.

The same style is continued in the next clause, "and (you shall do) good to (your) parents, and to the near of kin and to the orphans and the needy."

The change over to second person, although resorted to for the purpose of quoting the covenant, has put the speech back to the original style and has linked the last clauses of the covenant to the fresh admonitory ones: "and keep up prayer and pay the *zakãt.* Then you turned back . . ."

QUR'ÃN: *and* (you shall do) *good to* (your) *parents . . .:* As

translated here, it is a declarative sentence with the sense of imperative. It may also be translated as an imperative sentence: “and (do) good . . .” The verse gives, in descending order of importance, the list of those whom one should do good to. The parents are the root of man's existence, and nearest of all to him. Then come the near of kin. Going outside the circle of relatives, the orphans are most deserving of kindness and beneficence, because in their small age they are deprived of their father — their guardian, protector and bread-earner. Other needy persons come after them.

“and to the orphans” : *“al –Yatīm”* (اليَتِيمُ = orphan) is he whose father has died. The word is not used for him who has lost his mother. Also, it is said that a human child is called “orphan” if his father dies, but in animals, the adjective is used for one whose mother dies.

“and the needy”: *“al –Masãkīn”* (اَلمَسَاكِيْنُ) is plural of *al-miskīn* (المِسْكِيْنُ = needy, impoverished, destitue, lowly).

“and speak to men good (words)”: *“Ḥusnan”* (حُسْناً = beauty, excellence) is an infinitive verb, used for adjective (beautiful, excellent, good) to give emphasis. Some reciters have recited it *ḥasanan* (حَسَناً = beautiful, excellent, good). However, the sentence enjoins them to speak nicely to the people; it is an in-direct way of ordering them to maintain good social relations to behave with people nicely, gently and good-manneredly — no matter whether the opposite party is a believer or an unbeliever. It cannot be said to be abrogated by the verse of fighting, because the two verses are not contradictory to each other; the place and time of social contact is other than the place and time of fighting. For example, using hard words when admonishing a child to correct his behaviour is not contrary to maintaining good social relation.

QUR’ÃN: “*You shall not shed your blood . . .”:* This too is a prohibitory order, in the form of an information — the same style which was used in, “You shall not worship (any) but

Allãh". *"as-Safk"* (السَّفْكُ = to shed blood).

QUR'ÃN: *backing each other up against them: "at-Taẓãhur"* (التَّظاهُرُ = to help each other). *Aẓ-ẓahīr* (الظَّهِيْر = helper); it is derived from *Aẓ-ẓahr* (الظَّهْرُ = back) as though the helper strengthens the back of the helped one.

QUR'ÃN: *while their very turning away was unlawful for you:* Its literal translation will be, 'while it was unlawful for you their very turning out.' The pronoun "*it*" *is* not related here to any previously mentioned noun etc., it is a pronoun used to begin a sentence. In the verse, *Say: "He, Allãh is one"* (112:1), the pronoun "He" has the same grammatical significance.

QUR'ÃN: *Do you believe in a part of the Book . . .:* Why should you follow the rule of paying ransom for them and disobey the prohibition of turning them out? Are not both rules in the same book? Do you believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in the other?

QUR'ÃN: *And We sent apostles after him one after another: "at-Taqfiyah"*(التَّقْفِيَةُ = to send someone after someone else).

QUR'ÃN: *and We gave 'Īsã son of Maryam, clear evidence:* This subject will be dealt with in Chapter 3, (The Family of `Imrãn) .

QUR'ÃN: *And they say: "Our hearts are covered": al-Ghulf* (الغُلْفُ) is plural of *al -aghlaf* (الأَغْلَفُ). It is derived from *ghilãf* (غِلافُ = cover). They say: Our hearts are protected under various covers and veils — your call cannot reach our hearts. The sentence has the same import as the verse: *And they say: "Our hearts are under coverings from that to which you call us* (41: 5) .

TRADITIONS

Abũ Ja'far (a.s.) said about the words of Allãh, *and speak to men good* (words) : "Speak to men the best of that which you would like to be said about yourself." *(al-Kãfī)*

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said about this verse: "Speak to men, and do not speak but good until you know what it is."

al-Bãqir (a.s.) said: "Speak to men the best of that which you would like to be said about yourself; for certainly Allãh, Mighty and Great is He, dislikes an Abũser, curser, speaker of evil against the believers, indecent, shameless (and) begger, and He loves the modest, mild-tempered, chaste (and) moderate." *(Ma'ãni 'l-akhbãr)*

The author says: A tradition, similar to the first one, has been narrated in *al-Kãfi* from aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) with another chain of narrators; and similarly in al-`Ayyãshi.

Another tradition, like the second one has been written from the same Imãm in *al-Kãfī;* and one like the third is narrated from al-Bãqir (a.s.) in al-`Ayyãshi. Apparently these meanings of the "good word" have been inferred from general usage.

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) said: "Verily Allãh sent Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) with five swords: So (there is) a sword against *a dhimmi* (ذِمِّيّ = free non-Muslim subject of an Islãmic country). Allãh said: *and speak to men good* (words) ; it was revealed about the *dhimmīs,* then it was abrogated by another verse, *Fight those who do not believe in Allãh . . .* (9:29) (al-`Ayyãshi)

The author says: In this tradition the Imãm has taken the "speech" to mean behaviour. We say: Do not speak to him but good; what we mean is: Do not deal with him but in a good and decent manner. This meaning will apply only if we take the word, "abrogated" in its terminological sense. But it may also be taken in its literal sense (as we shall explain

under the verse: *Whatever signs We abrogate or cause to be forgotten* . . . 2:106); and in that case this verse will not be in conflict with that of the fighting. It should be pointed out that such uses of words in their literal meanings (as against their terminological ones) are not infrequent in the traditions of the Imãms.

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وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ
وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا
عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ـ ٨٩ . بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا
بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللهُ بَغْيًا أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ اللهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ
عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ـ ٩٠ . وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللهُ قَالُوا نُؤْمِنُ
بِمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ
قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ـ ٩١ . وَلَقَدْ
جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَى بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ
ظَالِمُونَ ـ ٩٢ . وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ
الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا
وَأُشْرِبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ
إِيمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ـ ٩٣ .

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And when there came to them a Book from Allãh verifying that which they have, and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved, but

when there came to them that which they did recognize, they disbelieved in him; so Allãh's curse is on the unbelievers (89). *Evil is that for which they sold their souls — that they should deny what Allãh has revealed, out of envy that Allãh should send down of His grace on whomsoever of His servants He pleases; so they returned with wrath upon wrath, and there is a disgraceful punishment for the unbelievers* (90). *And when it is said to them, "Believe in what Allãh has revealed," they say: "We believe in that which was revealed to us;" and they deny what is besides that, while it is the truth verifying that which they have. Say: "Why then did you kill Allãh's prophets before if you were indeed believers?"* (91) . *And most certainly Mũsã came to you with clear evidence, then you took the calf* (for a god) *in his absence and you were unjust* (92). *And* (remember) *when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain over you: "Take hold of what We have given you with firmness and listen* (to Our words)". *They said: "We hear and disobey." And they were made to imbibe* (the love of) *the calf into their hearts on account of their unbelief Say: "Evil is that which your belief bids you if you are believers"* (93).

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COMMENTARY

QUR'ÃN: *And when there came to them a Book:* The context shows that "a Book" refers to the Qur'ãn.

QUR'ÃN: *and aforetime they used to pray for victory*

against those who disbelieved: It appears that whenever the pagans of Arabia clashed with the Jews, the latter prayed for victory by the right of the Prophet, and by his prophethood and emigration; and that this was their usual custom before the advent of the Prophet, so much so that even the pagans knew it of them. It all is implied in the word, "they used to".

QUR'ÃN: *but when there came to them that which they did recognize:* They knew that Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was the awaited Prophet, because all the attributes and particulars mentioned in their books fitted on him perfectly. And yet they denied his truth.

QUR'ÃN: *Evil is that for which they sold their souls. . ..:* *"Baghyan"* (بَغياً = out of envy) is in accusative case, explaining the reason why they disbelieved in Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) even after recognizing him. What they did was "out of envy", "that Allãh should send down of His grace on whomsoever of His servants He pleases" was the object of their envy. "so they re-turned with wrath upon wrath", that is, they returned doubly enraged. It may also mean that they invited double wrath of Allãh upon themselves — the first because they disbelieved in Torah and the second because they disbelieved in the Qur'ãn.

The verse says that they were partisans of the Prophet long before he was born; they prayed to Allãh for victory by his name and his Book. When the Prophet was sent and the Qur'ãn was revealed, they very well recognized that he was the Prophet in whose name they used to pray for victory, and whose coming they awaited. But they were overwhelmed by envy and arrogance. No sooner did the Prophet begin his call then they denied his truth, and forgot all that they used to tell about the awaited prophet. It was not surprising as they had earlier disbelieved in Torah too. Thus they committed disbelief after disbelief, and invited the wrath of Allãh upon themselves, not once but twice.

QUR'ÃN: *and they deny what is besides that:* That is, they claim that they do not believe in any book other than Torah; but the fact is that they do not believe even in Torah.

QUR'ÃN: *Say: "Why then did you kill Allãh's prophets. . .":* The conjunctive, "then", serves to relate this question to their claim, "We believe in that which was revealed to us". If this claim of yours is correct then why did you kill the prophets of Allãh? And why did you disbelieve in Mũsã by taking the calf for a god? And why did you say, "We hear and disobey", when We took a promise from you and lifted the mountain over you?

QUR'ÃN: *and they were made to imbibe* (the love of) *the calf into their hearts: "al-Ishrãb"* (اَلإشْرَابُ = to make to imbibe, to make to drink). Instead of saying 'the love of the calf', the verse says, "to imbibe the calf", for emphasis, as though they had drunk the calf itself into their hearts. The sentence thus contains two metaphors — "the calf" for the love of the calf, and imbibing into hearts for loving.

QUR'ÃN : *Say: "Evil is that which your belief bids you . . .":* It is a derisive expression ridiculing them for their killings of the prophets, their disbelief in Mũsã and their arrogance in committing sin after sin and then claiming that they were the true believers. The verse tauntingly asks them: Is this what your belief bids you?

TRADITIONS

aṣ-Ṣãdiq (a.s.) explained the verse, *and when there came to them a Book from Allãh verifying that which they have . . .,* in this way: "The Jews found in their books that Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) , the Messenger of Allãh, would migrate and settle between `Ayr and Uḥud. So, they went out looking for that

place. They passed by a mountain called Ḥadãd[1] ; and they said: 'Ḥadãd and Uḥud are the same'. So they dispersed nearby; some of them settled at Taymã', and some others at Fadak and yet others at Khaybar. Those at Tayma' once desired (to see) some of their brethren (at another place). A Bedouin from (the tribe of) Qays passed by them and they hired (his camels).

He told them: 'I shall take you from between 'Ayr and Uḥud.' They told him: 'When you pass between the two, tell us.' When they reached the land of Medina, he said: 'That is 'Ayr and this is Uḥud.' They descended from his camels and said to him: 'We have now found (the place of) our desire; now we do not need your camels, you may go wherever you wish.' Then they wrote to their brethren at Fadak and Khaybar: 'We have found the place, come therefore to us.' They wrote in reply: 'Now we have settled in this place, and have acquired properties; and we are so near to you. Therefore, when it will happen (i.e., when the Prophet will come to Medina), we shall rush to you.' Those Jews acquired properties in the land of Medina. When their wealth increased, its news came to the ears of Tubba'[2] and he attacked them. They fortified themselves and he laid siege to them. (And they used to take pity on the weekly soldiers of Tubba' and throw dates and barley to them at night. This came

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1. In the printed copy of *at-Tafsīr* of al-`Ayyashi (vol. 1, P. 49) and what has been quoted from him in *al-Bihãr* (vol. 15, p. 226), *al-Burhãn* (vol. 1 , p. 128) and *Majma`u 'l-bayãn* (vol. 1, p. 158) the name has appeared as Ḥadãd. But we could not find such a name in geographical dictionaries. Perhaps it is a corruption of Ḥadãd which is a mountain over-looking Taymã'; (see *Mu`jamu 'l-buldãn,* vol. 2, p. 229; *al-Qãmũs,* vol. 1, p. 287 and *Tãju 'arũs,* vol. 2, p. 333) or it may be another reading of Ḥadãd. (*ed.*)

2. التُّبَّع (at-Tubba') was the title of the kings of Yemen.

to the notice of Tubba‘ and he softened towards them.)[2] He assured them of their safety and they came down to him. He told them: ‘I do like this place of yours and I am inclined to settle down here.’ They said: ‘It is not for you. It is the migration place of a prophet; and no one may settle down here until that happens.’ Thereupon he said: ‘Then I am leaving among you some of the members of my clan, so that when it happens they shall help and assist him.’ Thus he left behind the two tribes you see today, the Aws and the Khazraj. When these two (tribes) increased in number, they used to grab the properties of the Jews. At that time, the Jews used to warn them: ‘Oh! when Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is sent (by Allãh) we shall certainly turn you out from our town and properties.' But when Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was sent as Prophet, it was the Helpers (the Aws and the Khazraj) who believed in him and the very Jews denied him! This is the meaning of the words of Allãh, *and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved . . .”* (al-`Ayyãshi)

Ibn Isḥãq, Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Ḥãtam and Abũ Na'īm (in his *Dalã'ilu 'n-nubuwwah)* have narrated from Ibn ‘Abbãs that he said: “The Jews used to pray for victory against the Aws and the Khazraj by the right of the Messenger of Allãh, before he was sent as prophet. However, when Allãh raised him from the Arabs, the same Jews disbelieved in him and denied what they used to say about him. Mu`ãdh ibn Jabal, Bishr ibn abi ’l-Barã' and Dãwũd ibn Salamah told them: ‘O Jews! Fear Allãh and accept Islãm; because it was you who used to pray for victory against us by

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2. The sentences in parenthesis are not in *al-Mizãn.* They have been added from the quotation of al-`Ayyashi, given in *Bihãru 'l-an wãr,* vol. 15, p.226. (tr.)

the right of Muhammad, while we were polytheists, and you used to tell us that he would (soon) be sent, describing to us his attributes.' Salãm ibn Mushkim, one of the tribe of Banu an-Naḍīr, said to them: 'He has not brought to us anything we know; and he is not the prophet we were telling you about.' Then Allãh sent down (the verse): *And when there came to them a Book from Allãh . . .' " (ad-Durru 'l-manthũr)*

Abũ Nu'aym has narrated in his *Dala'ilu 'n-Nubuwwah* from the chains of 'Aṭã' and aḍ-Ḍaḥḥãk, from Ibn 'Abbãs that he said: "The Jews of Banu Qurayzah and Banu an-Naḍir, before Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was sent as prophet, used to pray to Allãh for victory, invoking Him against the disbelievers and saying: ' O Allãh! We seek Thy help, by the right of the untaught prophet, to let us triumph over them.' And they were given victory. But when there came to them that which they did recognize (i.e., Muhammad — s.a.w.a.), and actually they had no doubt whatsoever about him, they disbelieved in, and denied him. (*ad-Durru 'l-manthũr*)

The author says: Similar traditions have been narrated by various other chains also.

A commentator, after pointing to the last mentioned traditions and others like them, says: "These traditions — weak as their narrators are and incompatible as they are with the narrated traditions — are anomalous in their meaning too, because theymaintain that the prayer for victory was made 'by the person of the Prophet' or, as some traditions say, 'by the right of the Prophet'; and such a prayer is against the *sharī`ah;* and no one has any right on Allãh. How could prayer be offered with the help of such a non-existent right?

Reply: This objection results from not understanding the meaning of "right" and oath. Oath is used to join and bind a proposition, order, request or exclamation to an honourable and sublime thing — if that proposition etc. is wrong, the honour and sublimity of the thing bound to it, is tarnished and

damaged. When you say, “By my life, Zayd is standing”, you have bound the honour of your life to the truth of your statement; if that statement be wrong, your life would loose its honour. When you say, “By my life, I shall do this work”, or “I entreat you, by my life, to do this work”, you have, in the same way, put the honour of your life at stake for that work; if you did not do it, or if the second party did not heed to your entreaty, your life would loose its honour, its dignity. Two things emerge from this explanation:

First: Oath is the strongest method of emphasizing a talk, as the scholars of literature have confirmed.

Second: The thing by which one swears, must be more honourable and more important than the proposition etc. which it is related to; because a proposition cannot be emphasized with the help of a less important thing. Allãh has sworn, in His Book, by His own name and attributes. For example, *So, by your Lord, We would most certainly question them all* (15:92). Also, He quotes others swearing by His name and attributes: *By Allãh, our Lord* . . . (6:23) ; *Then by Thy Might I will surely make them live an evil life* (38:82). But He has also sworn by His Prophet, His angels and His books, as well as by His creatures like the heaven, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the night, the day, the mountains, the rivers, the towns, the man, the tree, the fig and the olive. It could not be possible unless these things had a real dignity of their own bestowed on them by Allãh; every such thing must have an attribute reflecting one of the divine attributes, or an activity related to the divine sublimity — and every dignity and honour emanates from Him.

Now, what objection can be raised against a suppliant, if he prays to Allãh for something entreating Him by one of the above-mentioned things — considering the fact that Allãh Himself has sworn by those things and has given them a sublimity and dignity? Why an exception should be made in case of the Apostle of Allãh only? Is it not an affront to the

Prophet to remove him from this common way of showing respect? By my life, Muhammad, the Apostle of Allãh (s. a. w. a.) is not less honourable in the eyes of Allãh than an Iraqi fig or a Syrian olive! These people forget that Allãh Himself has sworn by His Prophet : *By your life! they were blindly wandering on in their intoxication* (15 :72).

Now we should have a look at the "right". Right, as opposed to wrong, means a factual thing, existing outside imagination, like the earth and the man; in short, every real and substantial thing, as opposed to illusory and imaginary ones. Monetary and other social rights come within this category because they are firmly established by the society.

The Qur'ãn has nullified all the rights claimed by man, except that which is laid down and confirmed by Allãh — in creation as well as in legislation. Right in the legislative and social spheres is that which Allãh Himself has established, like the monetary rights, the rights of the brothers and the rights of the parents etc.

It is necessary to mention here that no one can lay down a right against Allãh, no one can make it incumbent upon Allãh to do or give something. But it is possible for Allãh to make it incumbent upon Himself to do something, or to give someone something, all in the sphere of legislation. Then that "someone" shall have a right on Allãh which Allãh Himself has established. For example, Allãh says: *even so* (now) *it is a right on Us* (that) *We deliver the believers* (10:103) ; *And certainly Our word has already gone forth in respect of Our servants, the apostles: Most surely they shall be assisted ones, and most surely Our host alone shall be the victorious ones* (37:171-173)

The assistance, promised here, is general and unconditional,not restricted by any proviso. Getting deliverance is the right of the believers on Allãh, and getting assistance is, in the same way, the right of the apostles. By establishing this right on Himself for the apostles, Allãh has

enhanced their dignity and honour. And there is nothing to prevent a suppliant from entreating Allãh to help and deliver him from his difficulties, by the right of His apostle or apostles. Allãh Himself has laid down that right and He Himself swears by every honourable thing, showing us that such oaths and adjurations are in fact liked by Him.

In short, there is no hitch in entreating Allãh by His Apostle or by the right of His Apostle. The same applies to entreating Him by His friends, or by the right of His friends. He has established a right for them on Himself that He will surely assist them in the path of happiness, with every related assistance.

The claim that “no one has any right on Allãh” is just a nonsense. Of course, no one can lay down a right for himself on Allãh; no one can make it incumbent on Allãh to do some thing. But a suppliant does not pray to Allãh by a right forced on Allãh by someone else; he pleads to Him by a right which He Himself has established pledging His Own word; and His Promise is never broken.

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LIST OF THE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS DEALT WITH IN THIS VOLUME

APPENDIX “A”

In this book the references of the Qur’ãnic verses have been given by writing serial number of the relevant chapter, followed by a colon (:) that is followed by the number/s of the verse/s. The names of the chapters have been omitted for the sake of brevity.

The names of the chapters with their serial numbers are given here for the guidance of the readers.

To find, for instance, the verse 5:67 in the Qur’ãn, the reader should open the fifth chapter, that its, *al-Mã'idah* (= The Table) and then find the 67th verse.

S.	Arabic Names of	Transliteration	Meaning
1.	فاتِحَةُ الكِتاب	*Fatihatu 'l-kitãb*	The Opening of The Book
2.	البَقَرة	*al –Baqarah*	The Cow
3.	آل عِمران	*Ãl ‘Imrãn*	The House of Imran
4.	النِّسـاء	*an-Nisã'*	Women
5.	المَـائِدة	*Al-Mã'idah*	The Table
6.	الأنْعـام	*Al –An‘ãm*	Cattle
7.	الأعراف	*al-A‘rãf*	The Battlements
8.	الأنْفـال	*al-Anfãl*	The Spoils
9.	التَّـوْبَة	*At-Tawbah*	Repentance
10	يُونُس	*Yunus*	Jonah

S.	Arabic Names of the Chapters	Transliteration	Meaning
11.	هُود	*Hũd*	Hood
12.	يُوسُف	*Yũsuf*	Joseph
13.	الرَّعد	*ar-Ra‘d*	Thunder
14.	اِبراهيم	*Ibrãhīm*	Abraham
15.	الحِجْر	*Al–Ḥijr*	El-Hijr
16.	النَّحل	*An-Naḥl*	The Bee
17.	الاِسْرآء	*al-Isrã'*	The Night Journey
18.	الكَهْف	*al-Kahf*	The Cave
19.	مَريَم	*Maryam*	Mary
20.	طه	*Tã Hã*	Ta Ha
21.	الأنْبيآء	*al-Anbiyã’*	Prophets
22.	الحَجّ	*al-Ḥajj*	The Pilgrimage
23.	المؤمِنون	*al-Mu'minũn*	The Believers
24	النّور	*an-Nũr*	Light
25.	الفُرقان	*al-Furqãn*	Discrimination (Salvation)
26.	الشُّعَراء	*ash-Shu‘arã'*	The Poets
27.	النَّمْل	*an-Naml*	The Ant
28.	القَصَص	*al-Qaṣaṣ*	The Stories
29.	العَنْكَبُوت	*al-‘Ankabũt*	The Spider
30.	الرُّوم	*ar-Rũm*	The Greeks
31.	لُقمان	*Luqmãn*	Lokman
32.	السَّجْدة	*as-Sajdah*	Prostration
33.	الأحزاب	*al-Aḥzãb*	The Confederates
34.	سَبَأ	*Saba'*	Sheba
35.	فاطِر (المَلائِكة)	*Fãṭir (or, al-Malã'ikah)*	The Originator (or The Angels)
36.	يس	*Yã Sīn*	Ya Sin
37.	الصّاقات	*aṣ-Ṣãffãt*	The Rangers
38.	ص	*Ṣãd*	Sad

S. No.	Arabic Names of the Chapters	Transliteration	Meaning
39.	الزُّمَر	*az-Zumar*	The Companies
40.	المُؤْمِن	*al-Mu'min*	The Believer
41.	فُصِّلَت	*Fuṣṣilat*	Distinguished
42.	الشُّورى	*ash-Shũrã*	Counsel
43.	الزُّخْرُف	*az-Zukhruf*	Ornaments
44.	الدُّخان	*ad-Dukhãn*	Smoke
45.	الجاثِية	*al-Jãthiyah*	Hobbling
46.	الأحقاف	*al-Aḥqãf*	The Sand-Dunes
47.	مُحَمَّد(ص)	*Muḥammad*	Muhammad
48.	الفَتْح	*al-Fatḥ*	Victory
49.	الحُجُرات	*al Ḥujurãt*	Apartments
50.	ق	*Qãf*	Qaf
51.	الذّاريات	*adh-Dhãriyãt*	The Scatterers
52.	الطُّور	*aṭ-Ṭũr*	The Mount
53.	النَّجْم	*an-Najm*	The Star
54.	القَمَر	*al-Qamar*	The Moon
55.	الرَّحمن	*ar-Raḥmãn*	The All-merciful
56.	الواقِعَة	*al-Wãqi'ah*	The Terror
57.	الحَديد	*al-Ḥadīd*	Iron
58.	المُجادَلة	*Al-Mujãdalah*	The Disputer
59.	الحَشْر	*al-Ḥashr*	The Mustering
60.	المُمتَحَنة	*al-Mumtaḥanah*	The Woman Tested
61.	الصَّف	*aṣ-Ṣaff*	The Ranks
62.	الجُّمُعة	*al-Jumu'ah*	Congregation
63.	المُنافِقُون	*al-Munãfiqũn*	The Hypocrites
64.	التَّغابُن	*at-Taghãbun*	Mutual Fraud
65.	الطَّلاق	*at-Talãq*	Divorce
66,	التَّحْريم	*at-taḥrīm*	The Forbidding
67.	المُلْك	*al-Mulk*	The Kingdom

S. No.	Arabic Names of the Chapters	Transliteration	Meaning
68.	القَلَم	*al-Qalam*	The Pen
69	الحَاقَـة	*al-Ḥãqqah*	The Indubitable
70	المَعارج	*al-Ma‘ãrij*	The Stairways
71	نُوح	*Nũḥ*	Noah
72	الجِنّ	*al-Jinn*	The Jinn
73	المُزَّمِّل	*al-Muzzammil*	Enwrapped
74	المُدَّثـِّر	*al-Muddaththir*	Shrouded
75	القِيامَة	*al-Qiyãmah*	The Resurrection
76.	الدَّهر (الإنسان)	*ad-Dahr* (or, *al -Insãn)*	The Time (or, Man)
77	المُرسَلات	*al-Mursalãt*	The Loosed Ones
78	النَّبأ	*an-Naba'*	The Tiding
79	النـّازعات	*an-Nãzi‘ãt*	The Pluckers
80	عَبَس	*‘Abas*	He Frowned
81	التـَّكوير	*at-Takwīr*	The Darkening
82	الإنفِطار	*al-Infiṭãr*	The Splitting
83	المُطـَفِّفين	*al-Muṭaffifīn*	The Stinters
84	الإنشِقاق	al-Inshiqãq	The Rending
85	البُروج	*al-Burũj*	The Constellations
86	الطـّارق	*at-Ṭãriq*	The Night-star
87	الأعلى	*al-A‘lã*	The Most High
88	الغاشِيَة	*al-Ghãshiyah*	The Enveloper
89	الفَجْر	*al-Fajr*	The Dawn
90	البَـلـَد	*al-Balad*	The Land
91	الشـَّمْس	*ash-Shams*	The Sun
92	اللـَّيل	*al-Layl*	The Night
93	الضُّحى	*aḍ-Ḍuḥã*	The Forenoon
94	الإنشِراح	*al-Inshirãh*	The Expanding

S. No.	Arabic Names of the Chapters	Transliteration	Meaning
95	التِّين	*at-Tīn*	The Fig
96.	العَلَق	*al-'laq*	The Blood-clot
97.	القَدر	*al -Qadr*	Power
98.	البَيِّنَة	*al -Bayyinah*	The Clear Sign
99.	الزِّلزال	*az-Zilzãl*	The Earthquake
100	العَاديات	*al-'Ãdiyãt*	The Chargers
101	القارعَة	*al-Qãri'ah*	The Clatterer
102	التَكاثـُر	*at-Takãthur*	Rivalry
103	العَصْر	*Al-'Aṣr*	Afternoon
104	الهُمَزَة	*al-Humazah*	The Backbiter
109	الفيل	*al-Fīl*	The Elephant
106	قـُرَيْش	*Quraysh*	Quraish
107	الماعُون	*al-Mã'ũn*	Charity
108	الكـَوْثَر	*al-Kawthar*	Abũndance
109	الكافِرون	*al-Kãfirũn*	The Unbelievers
110	النَّصر	*an-Naṣr*	Help
111.	تَبَّت	*Tabbat* (or, *Lahab)*	Perish (or,The Flame)
112.	الإخـْلاص (التَّوحيد)	*al Ikhlãṣ* (or, *at-Tawḥīd)*	Sincere Religion (or, Divine Unity)
113	الفـَلَق	*al-Falaq*	Daybreak
114	النَّاس	*an-Nãs*	Men

APPENDIX ‘B’

AUTHORS REFERRED TO IN THIS VOLUME (OF *AL -MIZÃN)* AND OTHER VOLUMES

NOTE: For reference to some of their work/s see Appendix D.

Abãn ibn Taghlib ibn Rabãh al-Bakri al-Jurayri (? — 141/758), the great Imãmite traditionalist and commentator.

Abãn ibn `Uthmãn Abũ `Abdillãh, al-Aḥmar (? — c. 200/815), the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.

`Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal — Abũ Muhammad ash-Shaybãni al-Baghdãdī (213/828—288/901), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

`Abdullãh ibn `Ãmir ibn Yazīd — Abũ `Imrãn al-Yaḥṣabi ad-Dimashqi (8/630 — 118/736), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

`Abdu 'r-Razzãq ibn Hammãm, Abũ Bakr aṣ-Ṣan‘ãni (126/744 — 211/827), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ `Amr ibnu 'l-`Ala' — Zabbãn ibn `Ammãr al-Mãzini al-Baṣrī (70/690 - 154/771), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Abũ `Awãnah — Ya`qũb ibn Isḥãq ibn Ibrahīm an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shãfi`ī (230/845 — 316/928), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abu ’l-Baqã' — `Abdullãh ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn `Abdillãh al-`Ukbarī al-Ḥanbali (538/1143 — 616/1219), the Sunnī scholar.

Abũ Dãwũd — Sulaymãn ibn al-Ash‘ath al-Azdi as-Sajistãni (202/817 — 275/ 889), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Dãwũd aṭ-Ṭayãlisi — Sulaymãn ibn Dãwũd al-Qurashi al-Baṣrī (133/750 — 204/819) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Dharr al-Harawī — `Abd ibn Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Anṣãri al-Mãliki (355/966 — 434/1043), the Sunnī scholar.

Abu ’l-Faraj al-Iṣfahãnī — `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad al-Umawi (284/ 897 — 356/967), the famous scholar.

Abu ’l-Fidã' — Ismã‘ī1 ibn `Ali ibn Maḥmũd al-Ayyũbi ash-Shãfi`ī (672/ 1273 — 732/1338), the famous Sunnī historian.

Abu ’l-Futũḥ ar-Rãzī — al-Ḥusayn ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Khuzã'i (? — c. 560/1165), the famous Imãmite commentator.

Abũ Ḥanīfah — an-Nu`mãn ibn Thabit al-Kũfī (80/699 — 150/767), the Ḥanafite Imãm.

Abũ Hanfah al-Miṣrī — al-Qadi, Ibn Hayyun, an-Nu` man ibn Muhammad ibn al-Manṣũr at-Tamīmī (c.270/884 -363/974), the famous Shiite scholar.

Abũ Ḥãtim — Muhammad ibn Idrīs ibn al-Mundhir al-Ḥanẓali ar-Rãzī (195/810 — 277/890), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Ḥayyãn al-Undulusi — Athīru 'd-Dīn, Ibn Ḥayyãn, Muhammad ibn Yũsuf al-Gharnãṭi ash-Shãfi`ī (654/1256 — 745/1344), the Sunnī scholar.

Abu ’l-Hudhayl al-`AllÃf — Muhammad ibn al-Hudhayl al-Baṣrī (135/753— 235/850), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar.

Abu ’l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī — Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib al-Mu'tazili al-Ḥanafī ( ? — 436/1044), the famous Mu`tazilite scholar.

Abũ Isḥãq ath-Thaqafi — Ibrãhīm ibn Muhammad ibn Sa‘īd al-Kũfī (? — 283/896), the great Imãmite traditionalist.

Abũ Naṣr as-Sijizzi — `Ubaydullãh ibn Sa‘īd ibn Ḥãtim al-Wã’ilī (? — 444/ 1052) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Nu'aym al-Iṣfahãni — Aḥmad ibn `Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ash-Shãfi`ī (336/948 — 430/1038) , the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abu ’l-Qãsim al-‘Alawi — `Ali ibn Aḥmad al-Kũfī (? — 352/963), the Imãmite scholar.

Abũ 'ṣ-Ṣalãh al-Ḥalabi — Taqi ibn an-Najm ibn `Ubaydillah (374/984 — 447/1055), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Abũ 'sh-Shaykh — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdullãh ibn Muhammad al-Ḥibbãnī al-Iṣfahãnī (274/887 — 369/979), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ `Ubayd — al-Qãsim ibn Sallãm al-Harawi (157/774 — 224/838), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Abu ’l-Walīd aṭ-Ṭayãlisī — Hishãm ibn `Abdi'l-Malik al-Baṣrī (133/750 — 227/741) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Ya`la — Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn al-Muthannã at-Tamīmī al-Mawṣili (210/ 825 — 307/919), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Abũ Ya`la al-Ja'fari — Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali ibn Ḥamzah al-Baghdãdī (? — 463/1071), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Aḥmad — Abũ `Abdillãh, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ḥanbal ash-Shaybãni (164/780 — 241/855), the Ḥanbalite Imãm.

Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Isã — Abũ Ja'far al-Ash‘ari al-Qummī ( ? — during 2nd half of the 3rd/9th c.), the famous Imãmite traditionalist. al-Ãjurrī — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn `Abdillãh al-Baghdãdīash-Shãfi`ī (? — 360/970), the Sunnī traditionalist.

`Ali ibn Ḥarb — Abu ’l-Ḥasan aṭ-Ṭã'i al-Mawṣili (170/786 — 265/879), the Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

al-`Allãmah al-Ḥillī — Abũ Manṣũr, Jamalu 'd-Dīn, al-Ḥasan ibn Yũsuf ibn `Ali ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Asadi (648/1250 — 726/1325), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

al-Ãlũsī — Abũ 'th-Thanã', Shihãbu 'd- Din, Maḥmũd ibn `Abdillãh al-Baghdãdi ash-Shãfi`ī(1217/1802 — 1270/1854), the Sunnī commentator.

al-Ãmidī — Abu ’l-Fatḥ, `Abdu 'l-Wãḥid ibn Muhammad ibn `Abdi 'l-Wãḥid at-Tamīmī (? — c. 550/1155), the traditionalist.

al-Amin — as-Sayyid Muḥsin ibn `Abdi 'l-Karim al-Ḥusaynī al-'Ãmili (1282/ 1865 — 1371/1952), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Amini — ash-Shaykh `Abdu 'l-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad at-Tabrizī an-Najafi (1320/1902 — 1390/1970), the famous Imãmite scholar.

`Amr ibn `Ubayd — Abũ `Uthmãn at-Taymi al-Baṣrī (80/699 — 144/761), the Mu‘tazilite Imãm.

al-Anbãri — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn al-Qãsim ibn Muhammad al-Baghdãdī al-Ḥanbali (271/884 — 328/940), the Sunnī scholar.

al-`Arũsi — ash-Shaykh `Abd `Ali ibn Jumu'ah al-Ḥuwayzi (? — 11th/17th c.), the Imãmite commentator.

al-Ash‘arī, Abu ’l-Ḥasan — `Ali ibn Ismã‘il ibn Abi Bishr al-Baṣrī (260/874 or 270/883 — 324/936), the Ash'arite Imãm.

`Aṣim ibn Abi 'n-Najũd (Bahdalah) al-Asadi al-Kũfī' (? — 127/745), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-‘Askari, Abũ Aḥmad — al-Ḥasan ibn `Abdillãh ibn Sa‘īd al-Baṣrī (293/906 — 382/993), the famous scholar.

al-'Askari, Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Sa'īd ibn `Abdillãh (? — 305/917),the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-'Askari, Abũ Hilãl — al-Ḥasan ibn `Abdillãh ibn Sahl al-Baṣrī (? — a.d. 395/1005), the famous scholar.

`Aṭa' ibn Muslim ibn Maysarah al-Khurãsãni (50/670 — 135/752), the commentator and traditionalist.

al-‘Atīqī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Baghdãdī (367/977 — 441/1049) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-`Ayyãshi — Abũ 'n-Naḍr, Muhammad ibn Mas‘ũd al-Sulami as-Samarqandi (? — 2nd half of the 3rd/9th c.) , the Imãmite commentator and tranditionalist.

al-Azhari — Abũ Manṣũr, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Azhar al-Harawi (282/895 — 370/981), the famous linguist.

al-Baghawi — Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Abdullãh ibn Muhammad ibn `Abdi 'l-`Aziz, Ibn bint Manī‘ al-Baghdãdī ash-Shãfi`ī (214/829 — 317/929), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Bahã'u 'd-Dīn al-`Ãmilī — Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn `Abdi 'ṣ-Ṣamad al-Ḥãrithī, ash-Shaykhu 'l-Baha'i (950/1543 — 1030/1621), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

al-Baḥrãnī — as-Sayyid Hãshim ibn Sulaymãn ibn Ismã‘ī1 al-Ḥusaynī (? — 1107/1696), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Balãdhurī — Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyã ibn Jãbir (? — 279/892) , the famous historian.

al-Balãghi — Muhammad Jawãd ibn Ḥasan ibn Ṭãlib ar-Raba‘i an-Najafi (1282/1865 — 1352/1933), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Balkhi — *see* al-Ka‘bi.

al Bãqillãni — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib ibn Muhammad al-Baṣrī, al-Baghdãdī al-Ash`ari al-Mãliki (338/950 — 403/1013), the famous Ash‘arite scholar.

al-Barqãni — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Khwãrazmī ash-Shãfi`ī (336/948 — 425/1034), the Sunnī scholar.

al-Barqi — Abũ Ja'far, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khãlid al-Qummī (? — 274/888), the Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Bayãdī — Zaynu 'd-Dīn, Abũ Muhammad, `Ali ibn Yũnus an-NabaṭI al-`Ãmili (791/1389 — 877/1472), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Baydãwi — Naṣiru 'd-Dīn, Abũ Said, `Abdullãh ibn `Umar ibn Muhammad

al-Ash'ari ash-Shãfi`ī (?685/1286), the famous Sunnī commentator and scholar.

al-Bayhaqi — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn an-Naysãbũrī (384/994 — 458/1066), the Shãfi`ite scholar.

al-Bazzar — Abũ Bishr, Harun ibn Ḥãtim al-Kũfī (? — 249/863),the Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

al-Bazzaz — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn `Amr ibn `Abdi'l-Khaliq al-Baṣrī (210/ 825 — 292/905), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Bazzi — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh al-Makki (170/786 — 243/857), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Bīrũnī Abũ Rayḥãn, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad al-Khwãrazmī (362/973 — 440/1048) , the famous Shi'ite scholar in astronomy, chronology, history, mathematics, medicine, philosophy and phisics.

al-Bisṭãmi — Nawrũz `Ali ibn Muhammad Bãqir al-Khurãsãnī (? — 1309/ 1892) , the Imãmite scholar.

al-Bukhãri — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Ismã‘il (194/810 — 256/870), the celebrated Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Burũsawi — Abu ’l-Fida', Isma‘īl Ḥaqqi ibn Muṣṭafã al-Ḥanafī (1063/ 1653 — 1137/1725), the Sunnī Ṣũfi commentator.

aḍ-Ḍaḥḥãk ibn Muzahim — Abu ’l-Qãsim al-Hilãlī al-Balkhi (? — 105/723), the Sunnī *tãbi `i* traditionalist and commentator.

Da‘laj ibn Aḥmad ibn Da‘laj — Abũ Isḥãq, as-Sijizzi al-Baghdãdī (260/874 — 351/962), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ad-Dãmãd — as-Sayyid Muhammad Bãqir ibn Shamsi 'd-Dīn, Muhammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Istarabãdi, al-Mird-Dãmãd (c. 960/1553 — 1041/1631), the famous Imãmite scholar and philosopher.

ad-Dãnī — Abũ `Amr, `Uthmãn ibn Sa`īd ibn `Uthmãn al-Andulusi (371/981— 444/1053), the famous Sunnī scholar and commentator.

ad-Dãrimī — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdullãh ibn `Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn as-Samarqandi (181/797 — 255/869), the Sunnī traditionalist.

aḍ-Ḍarīr al-Ḥīrī — Abũ `Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn, Isma`īl ibn Aḥmad ibn `Abdillãh an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shãfi‘ī (361/972 — 430/1039), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ad-Dãr-quṭni —Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn `Umar al-Baghdãdī ash-Shãfi`ī (306/919 — 385/995), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

ad-Daylami — Abũ Manṣũr, Shahr-dãr ibn Shīrũyah al-Hamadãnī ash-Shãfi`ī (483/1090 — 558/1163), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ad-Daylami — Abũ Muhammad, al-Ḥasan ibn Abi'l-Ḥasan (fl. 8th/15 c.), the Imãmite scholar.

ad-Daylamī — Abũ Shujã', Shīrũyah ibn Shahr-dar al- Hamadan ash- Shafi;i (445/1053 — 509/1115), the Sunnī traditionalist.

adh-Dhahabī — Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn

`Uthmãn ad-Dimashqi ash-Shãfi`ī (673/1274 — 748/1348), the famous Sunnī scholar.

aḍ-Ḍiyã' al-Maqdisī — Ḍiyã'u d-Dīn, Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn `Abdi 'l-Wãḥid as-Sa'dī al-Ḥanbali (569/1173 — 643/1245), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

ad-Dũlãbī — Abũ Bishr, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammãd al-Anṣãri ar-Rãzī al-Ḥanafī (224/839 — 310/923), the famous Ḥanafite traditionalist.

ad-Dũrī — Abũ `Umar, Ḥafṣ ibn `Umar ibn `Abdi 'l-`Azīz al-Azdi (150/767— 246/860), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur'ãn.

al-Fãḍil al-Jawãd — Abũ `Abdillãh, Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad Jawãd ibn Sa`d (-i 'llah) ibn Jawãd al-Kãẓimī (? — 1065/1655), the Imãmite scholar.

al-Fãḍil al-Miqdãd — Abũ `Abdillãh, al-Miqdãd ibn `Abdillãh ibn Muhammad as-Suyũri al-Asadī al-Ḥillī (c. 740/1340 — 828/1423) , the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Faḍl ibn Shãdhãn — Abũ Muhammad al-Azdī an-Naysãbũrī (c. 195/811 — 1260/873), the great Imãmite scholar.

Fakhru 'l-Muḥaqqiqīn — Fakhru 'd-Dīn, Abũ Ṭãlib, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan (al-`Allãmah al-Ḥillī) al-Asadi (682/1283 — 771/1370), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Fãriyãbī — *see* al-Firyãbi.

al-Fattal — Abũ `Ali, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali ibn Aḥmad ibn `Ali an-Naysãbũrī (? — 514/1120) , the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Fayḍ al-Kãshãni — Muhammad Muḥsin (1010/1599 — 1091/1690), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Fīrũzãbãdi — Majdu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn Ya`qũb ash-Shãfi`ī (729/ 1329 — 811/1415) , the famous Sunnī scholar.

al-Firyãbī — Abũ Bakr, Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan (207/822 — 301/913), the Sunnī scholar.

Furãt ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Furãt al-Kũfī (? — c. 300/913) , the Imãmite commentator and traditionalist.

al-Ganji — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Yũsuf ibn Muhammad ash-Shãfi`ī (? — 658/1260), the Sunnī scholar.

al-Ghazãli — Abũ Ḥãmid, Muhammad, ibn Muhammad at-Tũsī (450/1058- 505/1111), the famous Shãfi`ite scholar.

Ḥafṣ ibn Sulaymãn ibn al-Mughīrah — Abũ `Umar al-Asadī al-Kũfī (90/709-

180/796), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Ḥãkim — Abũ `Abdillãh, Ibnu 'l-Bayyi', Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh aḍ-Ḍabbi an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shãfi`ī (321/933 — 405/1014), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Ḥãkim al-Ḥasakãnī — `Ubaydullãh ibn Aḥmad an-Naysãbũrī al-Ḥanafī (? — a.d. 490/1097), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Ḥãkim at-Tirmidhi — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn al-Ḥasan (? — c. 320/932), the Sunnī Ṣũfi scholar.

(as-Sayyid) Ḥãmid Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad Quli al-Mũsawi al-Kantũrī (1246/ 1830 — 1306/1888), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ḥammãd ibn `Īsã — Aba Muhammad al-Juhanī al-Kũfī (c. 124/742 — 209/ 824) , the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Ḥammũyī — Abũ Isḥãq, Ibrãhīm ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr al-Juwayni ash-Shãfi`ī (644/1246 — 742/1322), the Sunnī scholar.

Ḥamzah ibn Ḥabīb ibn `Umãrah at-Taymi az-Zayyãt al-Kũfī (80/700 — 156/ 773), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Hannãd ibnu's- Sariyy ibn Muṣ`ab at-Tamīmī al-Kũfī (152/769 — 243/857), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbũb ibn Wahb - Aba `Ali as-Sarrãd (az-Zarrãd) al-Bajalī

al-Kũfī (149/766 — 224/839), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Ḥasan ibn Muhammad ibn Samã`ah — Abũ Muhammad al-Kindi, aṣ-Ṣayrafī al-Kũfī (? - 263/877), the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Ḥasan ibn Sufyãn ibn `Ãmir — Abu 'l-`Abbãs ash-Shaybãni an-Nasawī ash-Shãfi`ī (213/828 — 303/916), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ḥasan ibn Sulaymãn ibn Khãlid al-Ḥillī (? — a.d. 757/1356), the Imãmite scholar.

al-Haythami — Naru 'd-Dīn, Aba Bakr, `Ali ibn Abi Bakr ibn Sulaymãn al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (735/1335 — 807/1405), the Sunnī scholar.

Hibatullãh ibn Salãmah — Abu ’l-Qãsim al-Baghdãdī (? — 410/1019), the Sunnī commentator.

al-Ḥimyari — Abu ’l-'Abbãs, `Abdullãh ibn Ja'far ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Qummi (? — a.d. 297/910) , the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Ḥīrī — Abũ Sa‘īd, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Sa`īd an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shafi`i (288/901—353/964), the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

Hishãm ibn al-Ḥakam — Abũ Muhammad ash-Shaybãni al-Kũfī (c. 105/723—189/805), the celebrated Imãmite traditionalist and scholar.

al-Ḥumaydi — Abũ Bakr, `Abdullãh ibn az-Zubayr al-Asadi al-Makki (? — 219/834), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ḥumrãn ibn A'yan — Abu ’l-Ḥasan ash-Shaybãni al-Kũfī (? — c. 130/748), the famous Imãmite traditionalist and reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Ḥurr al-`Ãmilī — Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan (1033/1625 — 1104/1693), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Ḥusayn ibn Sa‘īd ibn Ḥammãd al-Ahwãzi (? — c. 250/864), the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibn `Abdi 'l-Bãrr — Abũ `Umar, Yũsuf ibn `Abdillãh al-Qurṭubi al-Mãliki (368/978 — 463/1071), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Ibn `Abdi 'l-Ḥakam — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh al-Miṣrī al-Mãliki (182/798 — 268/882), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn `Abd Rabbah - Abũ `Umar, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Qurṭubi (246/ 860 — 328/940) , the famous Sunnī man of letters.

Ibn Abi `Aqīl — Abũ Muhammad, al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali al-Ḥadhdhã' al- `Umãnī (fl. 4th/ 10th c.), the Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Abī Dãwũd - Abũ Bakr, `Abdullãh ibn Sulaymãn ibn al-Ash‘ath al- Azdi as-Sajistãni (230/844 — 316/929) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Abi 'd-Dunyã — Abũ Bakr, `Abdullāh ibn Muhammad al-Umawī al-Bagh-dãdi (208/823 — 281/894), the Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

Ibn Abi Ḥãtim — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Muhammad al-Ḥanẓali ar-Rãzī (240/854 — 327/938), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Abi Jumhũr — Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Ibrãhīm al-Aḥsã'i (? — c. 880/1475), the Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Abi Laylã -'Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Yasar al-Anṣãri al-Kũfī (18/639 — 82/701), the famous *tãbi`ī* traditionalist.

Ibn Abi Naṣr al-Bazanṭi — Abũ Ja'far, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Amr al-Kũfī (? — 221/836), the great Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibn Abī Shaybah — Abũ Bakr, `Abdullãh ibn Muhammad al-`Absī al-Kũfī (159/776 — 235/849), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Abi Shaybah — Abũ ‘l-Ḥasan, `Uthmãn ibn Muhammad al- `Absi al- Kũfī (150/767 — 239/853), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Abi Shaybah — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn `Uthmãn al-'Absi al-Kũfī (c. 205/821 — 297/910), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Abi `Umayr — Abũ Muhammad, Muhammad ibn Abi `Umayr (Ziyad) ibn `Isã al-Azdī al-Baghdãdī (? — 217/832), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibn Abī Usãmah — Abũ Muhammad, al-Hãrith ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Usãmah at-Tamīmī al-Baghdãdī (186/802 — 282/895), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn `Adiyy — Abũ Aḥmad, `Abdullãh ibn `Adiyy al-Jurjani ash-Shãfi`ī (277/ 890 — 365/976), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibnu'l-Anbãri — *see* al-Anbãri.

Ibn al-‘Arabi — al-Qãḍi, Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh ibn Muhammad al-Undulusi al-Ash'ari al- Mãliki (468/1076 — 543/1148), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn al-‘Arabi al-Ḥãtimi — Muḥyi 'd-Dīn, Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad aṭ-Ṭã’i al-Undulusi (560/1165 — 638/1240), the famous Sũfī Imãm.

Ibn `Asãkir — Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Ali ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Hibatillãh ad-Dimashqi ash-Shãfi`ī (499/1105 — 571/1176), the famous Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

Ibn Ashtah — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh al-Iṣfahãnī (?—360/ 971), the Sunnī commentator.

Ibnu 'l-`Aṣṣãr — Abũ'l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn `Abdi'r-Raḥīm ibn al-Ḥasan as-Sulamī al-Baghdãdī (508/1114 — 576/1180), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn A‘tham — Abũ Muhammad, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Kũfī (? — 314/927), the historian.

Ibnu 'l-Athīr — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Izu 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Jazari ash-Shãfi`ī (555/1160 — 630/1233), the famous Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

Ibnu 'l-Athīr — Abũ's-Sa`ãdãt, Majdu 'd-Dīn, al-Mubarak ibn Muhammad al-Jazari ash-Shãfi`ī (544/1149 — 606/1210), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Ibn `Aṭiyyah ad-Dimashqī — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdullãh ibn `Aṭiyyah (? — 383/993), the Sunnī commentator.

Ibn `Aṭiyyah al-Gharnãṭi — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdu 'l-Ḥaqq ibn Ghãlib al-Muḥãribi al-Mãlikī (481/1088 — 542/1148), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn `Ayyash al-Jawhari — Abũ `Abdillãh, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Ubaydillãh (? — 401/1011), the Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Babawayh — *see* aṣ-Ṣadũq.

Ibn Babawayh, Abu ’l-Ḥasan — `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Mũsã al-Qummi (c. 260/874 -329/941), (the father of aṣ-Ṣadũq), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibnu 'l-Barrãj — al-Qãḍī, Sa`du 'd-Dīn, `Abdul-`Azīz ibn Niḥrīr ibn `Abdil-`Azīz aṭ-Ṭarãbulusi (c. 399/1008 — 481/1088), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Baṭṭah — Abũ `Abdillãh, `Ubaydullãh ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Hamdan al-'Ukbari al-Baghdãdī al-Ḥanbali (304/917 — 387/997), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibnu 'l-Biṭrīq — Abũ'l-Ḥusayn, Yaḥyã ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Asadi al-Ḥillī (523/1129 — 600/1204), the Imãmite scholar.

Ibnu 'd— Daylami — *see* ad-Daylami, Abũ Manṣũr.

Ibn Dhakwan — Abũ `Amr, `Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ibn Bashīr al-Fihrī ad-

Dimashqī (173/789 — 242/857), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur'ãn.
Ibnu 'd-Durays — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Ayyũb ibn Yaḥyã al-Bajali ar-Rãzī (200/815 — 294/906), the Sunnī traditionalist.
Ibn Faḍḍãl — Abu 'l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali al-Kũfī (c. 206/821 — c. 280/893), the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.
Ibn Faḍḍãl — Abu 'l-Ḥusayn, Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali al-Kũfī (? -- 260/874) , the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.
Ibn Faḍḍãl — Abũ Muhammad, al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali ibn Faḍḍãl al-Kũfī (? — 224/839), the reliable Imãmite traditionalist.
Ibn Fahad — Abu 'l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Asadi al-Ḥillī (756/ 1355 — 841/1437), the Imãmite scholar.
Ibn Ḥajar al-`Asqalãni — Shihãbũ 'd-Dīn, Abu 'l-Faḍl, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad ash-Shãfi`ī (773/1372 — 852/1449), the famous Sunnī historian and traditionalist.
Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī — Abu 'l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Anṣãri ash-Shãfi`ī (909/1503 — 973/1566), the Sunnī scholar.
Ibn Ḥamzah — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Ḥamzah aṭ-Ṭũsī al-Ḥã'iri (? — a.d. 560/1165), the Imãmite scholar.
Ibn Ḥanbal — *see* Aḥmad.
Ibn Ḥasnun — Abũ Aḥmad, `Abdullãh ibn al-Ḥusayn as- Sãmarri al-Miṣri (295/908 — 386/996), the Sunnī commentator.
Ibnu 'l-Ḥaṣṣãr — `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm al-Khazrajī al-Fãsi al-Mãliki (? — 611/1214), the Sunnī scholar.
Ibn Ḥibbãn — Abũ Ḥãtim, Muhammad ibn Hibban at-Tamfmi al-Busti ash-Shãfi`ī (270/884 — 354/965), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.
Ibn Hishãm — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdu 'l-Malik ibn Hishãm al-Baṣrī (? — 213/828), the famous Sunnī historian.
Ibn Idrīs — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Manṣũr ibn Aḥmad al-`Ajlī al-Ḥillī (543/1148 — 598/1202), the famous Imãmite scholar.
Ibn Isḥãq — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn Isḥãq ibn Yasãr al-Muṭṭalibī al-Madani (c. 85/704 — 151/768), the famous historian and traditionalist.
Ibn Jammãz — Abũ ' r-Rabī` , Sulaymãn ibn Muslim az- Zuhri al-Madani (? — a.d. 170/787), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur'ãn.
Ibn Jarir al-Imãmi — Abũ Ja' far, Muhammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustam al-Ãmulī aṭ-Ṭabarī (fl. 4th/ 10th c.) , the Imãmite scholar.
Ibnu 'l-Jawzī — Abu 'l- Faraj, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Baghdãdī' al-Ḥanbali (508/1114 — 597/1202), the famous Ḥanbalite scholar.
Ibn Jinnī —Abũ 'l-Fatḥ, `Uthmãn ibn Jinnī al-Mawṣili al-Baghdãdī (c.

328/ 940 — 392/1002), the famous scholar.

Ibnu 'l-Junayd — Abũ `Ali, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibnu 'l-Junayd, al-Kãtib al-Iskafi al-Baghdãdī (? — 381/991), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Jurayj — Abu ’l-Walīd, `Abdu 'l-Malik ibn `Abdi 'l-`Azīz al-Makkī (80/699 — 150/767), the famous commentator and traditionalist.

Ibn Kathīr — `Imãdu'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Fida', Ismã‘īl ibn `Umar ad-Dimashqiash-Shãfi`ī (701/1302 — 774/1373), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Kathīr al-Makki — `Abdullãh ibn Kathir ad-Dãrī (45/665 — 120/738), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Ibn Khãlawayh — Abũ `Abdillãh, al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad al-Hamadãni al-Ḥalabi (? — 370/980), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Khaldũn — Abũ Zayd, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Muhammad al-Ishbīlī (732/1332 — 808/1406), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Ibnu 'l-Kharã 'iṭi —*see* al-Khara 'iṭi.

Ibn Khuzaymah — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn Isḥãq ibn Khuzaymah as-Sulamī an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shãfi`ī (223/838 — 311/924), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn al-Maghãzili — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Jullãbi al-Wãsiṭi ash-Shãfi`ī (? — 483/1090), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Mãjah — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Yazīd ar-Raba'ī al-Qazwinī (209/824 — 273/887), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Mandah, Abũ `Abdillãh (I) — Muhammad ibn Yaḥyã al-`Abdi al-Iṣfahãni al-Ḥanbali (220/835 — 301/914), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Mandah, Abũ `Abdillãh (II) — Muhammad ibn Isḥãq ibn Muhammad ibnYaḥyã al-Ḥanbali (310/922 — 395/1005), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Mandah, Abũ Zakariyyã — Yaḥya ibn `Abdi 'l-Wahhãb ibn Muhammad ibn Isḥãq al-Ḥanbali (434/1043 -511/1118), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Manī‘ — Abũ Ja'far, Aḥmad ibn Manī‘ al-Baghawi al-Baghdãdī (160/777 — 244/859), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Manẓũr — Abu ’l-Faḍl, Jamalu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn Mukarram al-Ifriqī (630/1232 — 711/1311), the famous linguist.

Ibn Marduwayh — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn Mũsã al-Iṣfahãnī (323/935 — 410/ 1019) , the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

Ibn Maysarah — Abu ’l-Walīd, Hisham ibn `Ammãr ibn Nuṣayr as-Sulamī ad-Dimashqi (153/770 — 245/859), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn and traditionalist.

Ibn Maytham — Kamãlu 'd-Dīn, Maytham ibn `Ali ibn Maytham al-Baḥrãnī (636/1238 — 699/1299), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Miqsam — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Ya`qũb al-`Aṭṭãr al-Baghdãdī (265/878 — 354/965), the Sunnī commentator.

Ibn Miskũyah — Abũ `Ali, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ya`qũb (c. 325/937 — 421/1030) , the famous scholar and historian.

Ibnu 'l-Mubãrak — Abũ `Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn, `Abdullãh ibn al-Mubãrak ibn Wãḍiḥ al-Ḥanẓali al-Marwazī (118/736 — 181/797), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn al-Munãdī — Abũ ’l-Ḥusayn, Aḥmad ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Baghdãdī al-Ḥanbalī (256/871 — 336/947), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibnu 'l-Mundhir — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm an-Naysãbũrī al-Makkī (242/858 — 319/931), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibnu 'l-Muṭahhar — Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn Yũsuf ibn `Ali al-Asadi al-Ḥillī (635/1238 — 710/1310) , the Imãmite scholar.

Ibnu 'n-Najjãr — Muḥibbu 'd-Dīn, Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Maḥmũd ibn al-Ḥasan al-Baghdãdī ash-Shãfi`ī (578/1183 — 643/1245), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

ibn Qãni` — Abu ’l-Ḥusayn, `Abdu 'l-Bãqī ibn Qãni` ibn Marzũq al-Umawī al-Baghdãdī (265/879 — 351/962), the famous traditionalist.

Ibnu 'l-Qayyim — Abũ `Abdillãh, Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah ad-Dimashqi (691/1292 — 751/1350), the student of Ibn Taymiyyah, Taqiyyu 'd-Dīn.

Ibn Qũlawayh — Abu ’l-Qãsim, Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Mũsã al-Qummi (c. 285/898 — 368/979), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Qutaybah — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdillãh ibn Muslim ad-Dīnawarī (213/828 — 276/889) , the famous Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Rãhwayh — Abũ Ya`qũb, Isḥãq ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Makhlad al-Ḥanẓali al-Marwazī (161/778 — 238/853), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibnu 'r-Rãzī — Abũ Muhammad, Ja'far ibn Aḥmad al-Qummī (fl. 4th/10th c.), the Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibnu 'ṣ-Ṣabbãgh — Nuru 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Aḥmad as-Safãqisī al-Mãlikī (784/1383 — 855/1451), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Sa‘d — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Sa`d al-Baghdãdī, Kãtibul-Wãqidī (168/784 — 230/845), the famous Sunnī historian.

Ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥillī — Abũ Zakariyyã, Yaḥya ibn Aḥmad ibn Yaḥya al-Ḥudhali (601/1205 — 690/1291), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Sayyidi 'n- Nãs, Fatḥu 'd-Dīn — Abu ’l-Fatḥ, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ya‘muri, al-Ishbīlī, ash-Shãfi`ī (671/1273 — 734/1334), the famous

Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Shãhīn — Abũ Ḥafṣ, `Umar ibn Aḥmad ibn `Uthmãn al-Baghdãdī (297/909 — 385/995), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Shahrãshũb — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn `Ali as-Sãrawī al-Mãzandarãnī (489/1096 — 588/1192), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibnu 'sh-Shaykh — Abũ `Ali, al-Ḥasan ibn (Shaykhu 'ṭ-Ṭa'ifah) Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan aṭ-Tũsī (? — c. 515/1121), the Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Shu‘bah — Abũ Muhammad, al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali ibn Shu‘bah al-Ḥarrãni (? — 4th/11th c.), the Imãmite traditionalist.

Ibnu 's-Sikkīt — Abũ Yũsuf, Ya`qũb ibn Isḥãq al-Baghdãdī (186/802 -- 244/858), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn as-Sunnī — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Isḥãq ad-Dīnawari (284/897 — 364/974), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Ṭalḥah — Kamalu 'd-Dīn, Abũ Sãlim, Muhammad ibn Ṭalḥah ibn Muhammad al-'Adawi ash-Shãfi`ī (582/1186 — 652/1254), the Sunnī scholar.

Ibn Ṭãwũs — Ghiyathu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Muẓaffar, `Abdu 'l-Karīm ibn Aḥmad ibn Mũsã ibn Ja'far al-Ḥasani al-Ḥillī (648/1250 — 693/1294), the great Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Ṭãwũs — Jamalu'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Faḍã'il, Aḥmad ibn Mũsã ibn Ja'far al-Ḥasani al-Ḥillī (c. 592/1196 — 673/1274), the great Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Ṭãwũs — Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Ali ibn Mũsã ibn Ja'far al-Ḥasani al-Ḥillī (589/1193 — 664/1266), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Ibn Taymiyyah — Majdu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Barakãt, `Abdu 's-Salãm ibn `Abdi-llah al-Ḥarrani al-Ḥanbali (590/1194 — 653/1255), the famous Hanbalite scholar.

Ibn Taymiyyah — Taqiyyu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn `Abdi 'l-Halim ibn `Abdi 's-Salim al-Ḥarrani al-Ḥanbali (661/1263 — 728/1328), the famous Ḥanbalite scholar.

Ibn 'Uqdah — Abu ’l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Sa‘īd al-Kũfī (250/864 — 332/944), the famous Shī‘ite traditionalist.

Ibn `Uyaynah — Abũ Muhammad, Sufyãn ibn `Uyaynah ibn Maymũn al-Hilãli al-Kũfī (107/725 — 198/814), the famous traditionalist.

Ibn Wãḍiḥ — *see* al-Ya`qũbi.

Ibn Wahb al-Miṣrī — Abũ Muhammad, `Abdullãh ibn Wahb ibn Muslim al-Fihri al-Mãliki (125/743 — 197/813), the famous Mãlikite scholar.

Ibn Zayd — `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Zayd ibn Aslam al-'Adawī al-Madani (? — 182/798), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Ibn Zuhrãh — `Izzu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Makãrim, Ḥamzah ibn `Ali al-Ḥusaynī al-Ḥalabi (511/1117 — 585/1189), the great Imãmite scholar.

Idrīs Ibn `Abdi 'l-Karīm — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Ḥaddad al-Baghdãdī (199/815—292/905), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Ījī al-Qãḍi `Aḍudu 'd-Dīn, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Aḥmad ibn `Abdi 'l-Ghaffãr ash-Shīrãzi al-Ash‘ari ash-Shãfi`ī (708/1308 — 756/1355), the famous Ash‘arite scholar.

`Ikrimah ibn `Abdillãh, Abũ `Abdillãh al-Barbarī (25/645 — 105/723), the Khãrijite *tãbi`ī* scholar.

‘Imãdu'd-Dīn aṭ-Ṭabari — Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Qãsim, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Amuli (? — c. 525/1131), the Imãmite traditionalist.

Imãmu 'l-Ḥaramayn al-Juwaynī — Diyã 'u 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Ma`ãli, `Abdu'l-Malik ibn `Abdillãh ibn `Abdi 'l-Malik an-Naysãbũrī al-Ash'ari ash-Shãfi`ī (419/1028 — 478/1085), the famous Ash‘arite scholar.

al-Irbilī — Bahã 'u 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn `Īsã ibn Abi 'l- Faṭh (625/1228 — 692/1293) , the famous Imãmite scholar.

`Īsã ibn Wardãn, Abu ’l-Ḥãrith al-Ḥadhdhã' al-Madani (? — c. 160/777), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Iṣfahãnī — *see* ar-Raghib.

al-Iṣfahãnī — Abũ Muslim, Muhammad ibn Baḥr (254/868 — 322/934), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar and commentator.

al-Iṣfahãnī al-Madīnī — Abũ Mũsã, Muhammad ibn `Umar ibn Aḥmad ash-Shafi`ī (501/1108 — 581/1185), the famous Sunnī scholar.

al-Iṣfahãnī al-Malanjī — Abũ Mas‘ũd, Sulaymãn ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Muhammad (397/1007 — 486/1093), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Iṣfahãni at-Taymī — Qawamu'd-Dīn, Abũ'l-Qãsim, Ismã‘īl ibn Muhammad ibn al-Faḍl al-Qurashī ash-Shãfi`ī (457/1065 — 535/1141), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Isḥãq ibn Ibrãhīm ibn `Uthmãn — Abũ Ya`qũb al-Marwazi al-Baghdãdī (? — 286/899), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Istarabãdī — Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Ibrãhīm (? — 1028/1619), the Imãmite scholar.

Jãbir ibn Yazīd ibn al-Ḥãrith — Abũ `Abdillãh al-Ju‘fi al-Kũfī (? — 128/745), the Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Jãḥiẓ — Abũ `Uthmãn, `Amr ibn Baḥr al-Baṣrī (163/780 — 255/869), the famous Mu‘tazilite man of letters.

al-Jaṣṣaṣ — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ar-Rãzī al-Ḥanafī (305/917 — 370/980), the Ḥanafite scholar.

al-Jawharī — Abũ Isḥãq, Ibrãhīm ibn Sa‘īd al-Baghdãdī al-Ḥanbali (?

247/861) , the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Jawhari — Abũ Naṣr, Ismã‘īl ibn Ḥammãd an-Naysãbũrī (? — 393/ 1003), the famous linguist.

al-Jaza'irī — ash-Shakh Aḥmad ibn Ismã‘īl ibn `Abdi 'n-Nabi an-Najafi (? — 1151/1738), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Jazã’irī — Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Khayr, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Umari ash-Shãfi`ī (751/1350 — 833/1429), the famous Sunnī traditionalist and reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Jubbã'ī — Abũ `Ali, Muhammad ibn `Abdi 'l-Wahhãb al-Baṣrī (235/ 849 — 303/916), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar.

al-Jubbã'ī — Abũ Hãshim, `Abdu's-Salãm ibn Muḥammad al-Baṣrī (247/ 861 — 321/933), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar.

al-Ka‘bī al-Balkhī — Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ibn Maḥmũd al-Mu‘tazilī al-Ḥanafī (273/886 — 319/931), the famous Mu`tazilite scholar.

al-Kalbī — Abu ’l-Mundhir, Hishãm ibn Muḥammad al-Kũfī (? — 204/ 819), the famous Imãmite historian and traditionalist.

al-Kalbī — Abũ 'n-Naḍr, Muhammad ibn as-Sã‘ib al-Kũfī (? — 146/763), the famous Imãmite historian and traditionalist.

al-Karãjikī — Abu ’l-Fatḥ, Muḥammad ibn `Alī ibn `Uthmãn (c. 369/950 — 449/1057), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Kãshãnī — Fatḥullãh ibn Shukrillãh (? — 988/1580), the Imãmite scholar and commentator.

Khalaf ibn Hishãm — Abũ Muḥammad al-Bazzãr al-Asadī al-Baghdãdī (150/ 767 - 229/844), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Khallãd ibn Khãlid — Abũ `Isã, aṣ-Ṣayrafī ash-Shaybãni al-Kũfī (? — 220/835), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Khara'iṭī — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn Ja‘far as-Sãmarrī (240/854 — 327/ 938), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Kharkũshī — Abũ Sa‘īd, `Abdu'l-Malik ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm an-Naysãbũri ( ? — 407/1016), the famous Sunnī traditionalist. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdãdī — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn Thãbit ash-Shãfi`ī (392/1002 — 463/1072), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Khaṭīb al-Khwãrazmī — Abũ'l-Mu'ayyad, al-Muwaffaq ibn Aḥmad al-Ḥanafī. (484/1091 — 568/1172), the famous Sunnī scholar. al-Khaṭṭãbī — Abũ Sulaymãn, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Busti (319/931— 388/998), the Sunnī scholar.

Khaythamah ibn Sulaymãn — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Qurashi aṭ-Ṭarãbulusī (250/ 864 — 343/955), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Khãzin — `Alau 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm al-Baghdãdī ash-Shãfi`ī (678/1280 — 741/1341), the Sunnī commentator.

al-Kisã'ī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Ḥamzah ibn `Abdillãh al-Asadi al-Kũfī (119/737 — 189/805), the famous scholar and reciter of the Qur’ãn.

al-Kishshi — Abũ `Amr, Muhammad ibn `Umar ibn `Abdi 'l-`Azīz (? —c. 340/951), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Kulaynī — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ya`qũb ar-Rãzī (? — 328/9 = 940/1), the celebrated Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Lãlikã'i — Abu ’l-Qãsim, Hibatullãh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Manṣũr at-Ṭabari ash-Shãfi`ī ( ? — 418/1027), the Shãfi`ite scholar.

Layth ibn Khãlid — Abu ’l-Ḥãrith. al-Baghdãdī (? — 240/854), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Madã'inī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh al-Baṣrī (135/752 — 225/840), the famous historian.

al-Maḥãmilī — Abũ `Abdillãh, al-Ḥusayn ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad aḍ-Ḍabbī al-Baghdãdī (235/849 — 330/941), the famous traditionalist.

al-Majlisī (I) — Muhammad Taqī ibn Maqṣũd `Ali (1003/1595 — 1070/1660), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Majlisī (II) — Muhammad Bãqir ibn Muhammad Taqī, al-`Allãmah al-Majlisī (1037/1628 — 1110/1699), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

Mãlik ibn Anas — Abũ `Abdillãh al-Aṣbaḥī al-Madanī (93/712 — 179/795), the Mãlikite Imãm.

al-Maqrīzī — Taqqiyu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn `Abdi 'l-Qãdir al-Miṣri, al-Ḥanafī (769/1367 — 845/1441), the famous historian.

al-Marwazī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Naṣr (202/817 — 294/906), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Marzubãnī — Abũ Abdillah, Muhammad ibn `Imrãn ibn Mũsã al-Baghdãdī (297/910 — 384/994), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Mãwardī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Baṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (364/974 — 450/1058), the Sunnī scholar.

Mu`ãwiyah ibn `Ammãr — Abu ’l-Qãsim ad-Duhnī al-Kũfī (100/974 — 175/791), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Mubarrad — Abu ’l-`Abbãs, Muhammad ibn Yazīd ibn `Abdi'l-Akbar al-Azdī al-Baṣrī (210/826 — 286/899), the famous linguist and historian.

al-Mufīd — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn an-Nu`mãn, Ibnu 'l-Mu`allim al-Mufīd al-`Ukbarī al-Baghdãdī (336/948 — 413/ 1022), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

Muhammad `Abduh (ash-Shaykh) ibn Ḥasan Khayrillãh (1266/1850 — 1323/1905), the famous Egyptian scholar.

Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ash-Shaybãnī (? — 2nd half of the 7th/ 13th c.).

Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ash`ath — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Kũfī al-Miṣrī (? - fl. 313/925), the Imãmite traditionalist.

Muhammad ibn Muslim — Abũ Ja‘far ath-Thaqafī al-Kũfī (c. 80/723 — 150/767),the celebrated Imãmite scholar and traditionalist.

Muhammad ibn Naṣr — Abũ `Abdillãh al-Marwazi (202/817 — 294/906), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Muḥaqqīq al-Ardabīlī — ash-Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Muhammad an-Najafī (c. 910/1505 — 993/1585), the great Imãmite scholar.

al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī — Najmu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Qãsim, Ja`far ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Yaḥya ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥudhalī (602/1206 — 676/1277), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

al-Muḥaqqiq al-Karakī — Nũru 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn `Abdi 'l-`Ãli al-`Ãmilī (c. 868/1463 — 940/1534), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Muḥaqqiq al-Khwãnsãri — al-Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad ibn al-Husyan (1016/1608 — 1098/1687), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Muḥaqqiq as-Sabzawãrī — Muhammad Bãqir ibn Muhammad Mu'min (c. 1000/1592 — 1090/1679), the famous Imãmite scholar.

al-Muḥibb aṭ-Ṭabari — Muḥibbu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-`Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn `Abdillãh ibn Muhammad al-Makki ash-Shãfi`ī (615/1218 — 694/1295), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Muḥsin al-Fayḍ — *see* al-Fayḍ

Mujãhīd ibn Jabr — Abũ 'l-Ḥajjãj al-Makkī (21/642 — 104/722), the famous commentator).

al-Mundhirī — Zakiyyu 'd-Dīn, Abũ Muhammad, `Abdu'l-`Aẓim ibn `Abdi 'l-Qawī al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (581/1185 — 656/1258), the famous traditionalist.

Muqãtil ibn Ḥayyãn — Abũ Biṣṭãm an-Nabaṭi al-Balkhi (? — c. 150/767), the Sunnī commentator.

Muqãtil ibn Sulaymãn — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Azdī al-Balkhī (? — 150/767), the famous Sunnī commentator.

al-Murtaḍã — ash-Sharīf, Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, `Alamu 'l-Hudã, al-Mũsãwī (355/966 — 436/1044), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

al-Murtaḍã az-Zabīdī — Abu ’l-Fayḍ, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ḥusaynī (1145/1732 — 1205/1791), the famous linguist.

Mũsã ibn `Uqbah — Abũ Muhammad al-Qurashī al-Asadī (? — 141/758), the Sunnī historian.

Musaddad ibn Musarhad ibn Musarbal — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Asadi al-Baṣrī (? —

228/843), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

Muslim — Abu ’l-Ḥusayn, Muslim ibn al-Hajjãj al-Qushayrī an-Naysãbũrī (204/820 — 261/1875), the famous Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Muttaqī al-Hindī — `Alã'u 'd-Dīn, `Ali ibn Ḥusami 'd-Dīn al-Burhãnfũrī (885/1480 — 975/1567), the Sunnī scholar.

Nãfi‘ ibn `Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Abi Nu‘aym al-Laythī al-Madanī (? — 169/785), one of the seven reciters of the Holy Qur’ãn.

an-Naḥḥãs — Abũ Ja'far, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ismã`ī1 (? — 338/ 950) , the Sunnī scholar.

an-Najãshī — Abu ’l-Abbãs, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn Aḥmad ibn al-`Abbãs al-Asadi al-Baghdãdī (372/982 — 450/1058), the famous Imãmite scholar.

an-Najjãd — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn Salmãn ibn al-Ḥasan al-Baghdãdī al-Ḥanbalī (253/867 — 348/960), the Sunnī traditionalist.

an-Naqqãsh — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muhammad al-Mawṣilī as-Shãfi`ī (266/880 — 351/962), the Sunnī scholar.

an-Nasafi — Abu ’l-Barakãt, `Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ibn Maḥmũd al-Ḥanafī (? — 710/1310), the Sunnī commentator.

an-Nasã'i — Abũ `Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn, Aḥmad ibn `Ali ibn Shu‘ayb (215/830 — 303/915), the famous Shãfi`ite traditionalist.

Naṣiru 'd-Dīn aṭ-Ṭũsī — Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan (597/ 1201 — 672/1274), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

(as-Sayyid) Nãṣir Ḥusayn ibn Ḥãmid Ḥusayn al-Mũsãwi al-Kantũrī (1284/ 1867 — 1361/1943), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Nasr ibn Muzãḥim — Abu ’l-Faḍl, al-Minqãrī al-Kũfī (c . 120/738 — 212/ 827) , the famous Shi‘ite historian.

an-Nawawī — Muḥyi 'd-Dīn, Abũ Zakariyyã, Yaḥyã ibn Sharaf ad-Dimashqī ash-Shafi`ī (631/1233 — 676/1277), the famous Sunnī scholar. an-Nawbakhti — Abũ Muhammad, al-Ḥasan ibn Mũsã ibn al-Ḥasan al-Baghdãdī (? — c. 310/922), the famous Imãmite scholar.

an-Nawbakhtī — Abũ Sahl, Ismã‘īl ibn `Ali ibn Isḥãq al-Baghdãdī (237/851 — 311/923), the famous Imãmite scholar.

an-Naysãbũrī al-A‘raj — Niẓãmu 'd-Dīn, al-Ḥasan ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Qummi (? — a.d. 850/1446), the Sunnī commentator.

an-Naẓẓãm — Abũ Isḥãq, Ibrãhīm ibn Sayyãr al-Baṣrī (c . 160/776 — 231/845) , the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar.

Nu‘aym ibn Ḥammãd — Abũ `Abdillãh al-Marwazī (? — 229/844), the Sunnī traditionalist.

an-Nu`mãnī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Ja'far, Ibn Abi Zaynab al-Kãtib (? — c. 360/971), the Imãmite scholar.

an-Nũrī — al-Mīrzã Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad Taqī aṭ-Ṭabarsī (1254/1838 — 1320/1875), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

al-Qãḍī `Abdi 'l-Jabbãr ibn Aḥmad ibn `Abdu 'l-Jabbãr al-Hamadãnī al-Mu‘tazilī ash-Shãfi`ī (320/932 — 415/1025), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar.

al-Qãḍī `Iyãḍ ibn Mũsã ibn `Iyãḍ — Abu ’l-Faḍl, al-Yaḥṣabī as-Sabtī al-Mãlikī (476/1083 — 544/1149), the famous Mãlikite scholar.

Qãlũm — Abũ Mũsã, `Īsã ibn Minã' ibn Wardãn al-Madanī (220/738 — 220/ 835), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Quḍã’ī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Salãmah ibn Ja'far al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (? — 454/1062), the Sunnī scholar.

Qatãdah ibn Di‘ãmah — Abu ’l-Khaṭṭãb as-Sadũsī al-Baṣrī (61/680 — 118/ 730, the famous commentator and traditionalist.

al-Qummī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Hãshim (? — fl. 307/920), the Imãmite traditonalist.

Qunbul — Abũ `Umar, Muhammad ibn 'Abdi 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Muhammad al-Makhzũmī al-Makkī (195/810 — 291/904), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Qundũzī — Sulaymãn ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Muhammad al-Ḥanafī (1220/1805 — 1294/1877), the Sunnī scholar.

al-Qurṭubi — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abi Bakr al-Anṣãri al-Mãlikī (? — 671/1273), the Sunnī commentator.

al-Qushayrī — Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Abdu'l-Karīm ibn Hawãzim an-Naysãbũrī al-Ash‘ari ash-Shãfi`ī (376/986 — 465/1072), the Sunnī Sũfī scholar.

ar-Raḍī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī al-Mũsãwi (359/970 — 406/1015), the famous Imãmite scholar.

ar-Rãghib — Abu ’l-Qãsim, al-Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad ibn al-MuFaḍḍãl al-Iṣfahãnī (? — 502/1108) , the Ḥanafite scholar.

Rashīd Riḍã Muhammad Rashīd Riḍã ibn `Ali Riḍã at-Tarãbulusī al-Miṣrī (1282/1865 — 1354/1935), the Sunnī scholar.

ar-Rãwandī — Quṭbu 'd-Dīn, Sa‘īd ibn Hibatillãh al-Kãshãnī (? – 573/1187), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Rawḥ ibn `Abdi 'l-Mu'min — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Hudhalī al-Baṣrī (? – 234/848), the famous recite of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Razīn ibn Mu`ãwiyah ibn `Ammãr — Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-`Abdarī as-Saraqasṭī al-Mãlikī (? — 535/1140), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ar-Rummãnī — Abũ 'l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn `Īsã al-Baghdãdī (296/908 — 384/ 994), the famous Mu‘tazilite scholar and commentator.

Ruways — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn al-Mutawakkil al-Lu'lu'ī al-Baṣrī (? — 238/853), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur'ãn.

Sadru 'l-Muta'allihīn — Ṣadru 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm ibn Yaḥyã al-Qawãmī ash-Shīrãzī (979/1571 — 1050/1640), the celebrate Imãmite philosopher.

aṣ-Ṣadũq — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn, Ibn Bãbawayh al-Qummī (c. 306/919 — 381/991), the celebrated Imãmite traditionalist. aṣ-Ṣaffãr — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Farrũkh al-Qummī (? — 290/903), the Imãmite traditionalist.

aṣ-Ṣafwãnī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn `Abdillãh al-Quḍã`ī (? — a.d. 352/963), the Imãmite scholar.

Ṣafwãn ibn Yaḥyã — Abũ Muhammad al-Bajali al-Kũfī, Bayya`u's-Sabin (? — 210/825), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

Ṣahibu 'l-Ma`ãlim — Abũ Manṣũr, al-Ḥasan ibn Zaynu 'd-Dīn al-`Ãmilī (959/1552 — 1011/1602), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Sa'īd ibn Jubayr — Abũ `Abdillãh al-Asadī al-Kũfī (45/665 — 95/714), the famous *tãbi 'ī* scholar.

Sa'īd ibn al-Manṣũr — Ibn Shu'bah, Abũ `Uthmãn al-Marwazi (c. 152/969 — 227/842), the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab ibn Ḥazn, Abũ Muhammad al-Makhzũmī al-Madanī (13/634 — 94/713), the famous *tãbi 'ī* scholar.

Sallãr — Abũ Ya'lã, Sallãr (Sãlãr) ibn `Abdi 'l-`Azīz ad-Daylamī (? — 448/1056), the famous Imãmite scholar.

as-Sam'ãnī — Abũ Sa'd, `Abdu 'l-Karīm ibn Muhammad ash-Shãfi`ī (506/1113 — 562/1166), the famous Sunnī historian and traditionalist.

as-Sammãn — Abũ Sa'd, Ismã'īl ibn `Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ar-Rãzī (363/974— 447/1055), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Sammũyah — Abũ Bishr, Ismã'īl ibn `Abdillãh ibn Mas'ũd al-'Abdī al-Iṣfahãnī (? — 267/880), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ash-Sha`bī — Abũ `Amr, `Ãmir ibn Sharãḥil al-Ḥimyarī (19/649 — 103/ 721), the famous *tãbi`ī* traditionalist.

ash-Shãfi`ī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Idrīs (150/767 — 204/820), the Shãfi`ite Imãm.

ash-Shahīd al-Awwal — Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Muhammad ibn Makkī ibn Muhammad al-Jazzinī al-`Ãmilī (734/1333 — 786/1384), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

ash-Shahīd ath-Thãnī — Zaynu d-Dīn ibn `Ali ibn Aḥmad al-Jaba'ī al-`Ãmilī (911/1505 — 966/1559), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

Sharafu 'd-Dīn — as-Sayyid `Abdu 'l-Ḥusayn ibn Yũsuf al-Mũsãwi al-`Ãmilī

(1290/1873 — 1377/1957), the famous Imãmite scholar.

Sharafu 'd-Dīn al-Istarabãdī — as-Sayyid `Ali al-Ḥusaynī al-Gharawi (an-Najafi) (? — 2nd half of 10th/16th c.), the Imãmite scholar.

ash-Sharif al-Jurjãni — `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Ash‘ari al-Ḥanafī (740/1340 — 816/1413), the famous Ash‘arite scholar.

ash-Shãshī — Abũ Sa‘īd, al-Haytham ibn Kulayb ibn Shurayḥ (? — 335/ 946), the Sunnī traditionalist.

ash-Sharīf al-Murtadã — *see* al-Murtaḍã.

ash-Sharīf ar-Raḍī — *see* ar-Raḍī.

ash-Shawkãnī — Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Yamãnī (1173/ 1760 — 1250/1834), the Sunnī scholar.

ash-Shaykh — Abũ Ja‘far, Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn `Ali, Shaykhu 'ṭ-Ṭa'ifah, aṭ-Ṭũsī (385/995 — 460/1067), the celebrated Imãmite scholar.

ash-Shiblanji — Mu'min ibn Ḥasan ibn Mu'min al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (1252/1836 — 1322/1904), the Sunnī scholar.

ash-Shīrãzī — Abũ Bakr, Aḥmad ibn `Abdi 'l-Raḥmãn ibn Aḥmad (? — 407/1017), the famous Sunnī scholar.

Shu‘bah ibn `Ayyãsh ibn Sãlim — Abũ Bakr al-Azdī al-Khayyãṭ al-Kũfī (95/714 -193/809), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Shubbar — as-Sayyid `Abdullãh ibn Muhammad Riḍã al-Ḥusaynī (1188/ 1774 — 1242/1827) , the famous Imãmite traditionalist.

Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī — Shamsu 'd-Dīn, Abu ’l-Muẓẓafar, Yũsuf ibn Qizã‘ughlī ibn `Abdillãh al-Ḥanafī (581/1185 — 654/1256), the famous Sunnī scholar.

as-Silafī — Abũ Ṭãhir, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad al-Iṣfahãnī (475/1082 — 576/ 1180) , the Sunnī scholar.

Simãk ibn Ḥarb ibn Aws — Abu ’l-Mughīrah adh-Dhuhlī al-Kũfī (? — 123/741), the *tãbi‘ī* traditionalist.

as-Subkī, Tãju 'd-Dīn — Abũ Naṣr, `Abdu 'l-Wahhãb ibn `Ali ibn `Abdi 'l-Kãfī al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (727/1327 — 771/1370), the famous Sunnī scholar.

as-Subkī, Taqiyyu 'd-Dīn — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn `Abdi 'l-Kafi al-Anṣãri ash-Shãfi`ī (683/1284 — 756/1355), the famous Sunnī scholar.

as-Suddī (al-Kabīr) — Ismã‘īl ibn `Abdi'r-Raḥmãn al-Kũfī (? — 128/745), the commentator.

Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilãlī (? — c. 90/709), the Imãmite *tãbi`ī* traditionalist.

Sunayd ibn Dãwũd — Abũ `Ali al-Muḥtasib al-Miṣṣīṣī (? — 226/841), the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

as-Sũsī — Abũ Shu‘ayb, Sãliḥ ibn Ziyãd ar-Raqqī (173/790 — 261/874), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

as-Suyũṭi — Jalãlu 'd-Dīn, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Abī Bakr ibn Muhammad ash-

Shãfi`ī (849/1445 — 911/1505), the famous Shãfi`ite scholar.

aṭ-Ṭabarãnī — Abu ’l-Qãsim, Sulaymãn ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyũb (260/873 — 360/971) , the famous Sunnī traditionalist.
aṭ-Ṭabrisī — Abũ `Ali, al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl (? — 548/1153), the Imãmite commentator.
aṭ-Ṭabrisī — Abu ’l-Faḍl, `Ali ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl (6th/12th c.), the Imãmite scholar.
aṭ-Ṭabrisī — Abũ Manṣũr, Aḥmad ibn `Ali (? — 620/1223), the Imãmite traditionalist.
aṭ-Ṭabrisī — Abũ Naṣr, al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan (? — 6th/12th c.), the Imãmite traditionalist.
at-Taftãzãnī — Sa`du 'd-Dīn, Mas‘ũd ibn `Umar ibn `Abdillãh al-Ash'ari ash-Shãfi`ī (712/1312 — 793/1390), the famous Sunnī scholar.
aṭ-Ṭahãwī — Abũ Ja'far, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Salãmah al-Miṣrī al-Ḥanafī (239/853 — 321/933), the Ḥanafite scholar.
Ṭanṭãwī ibn Jawharī al-Miṣrī (1287/1870 — 1358/1940), the Sunnī Egyptian commentator.
aṭ-Ṭayãlisī — *see* Abũ Dãwũd aṭ-Ṭayãlisī.
aṭ-Ṭayyibī — Sharafu 'd-Dīn, al-Ḥusayn ibn Muhammad ibn `Abdillãh (? 743/1342), the famous Sunnī scholar.
ath-Tha`labī — Abũ Isḥãq, Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrãhīm (? — 427/ 1035), the Sunnī commentator.
ath-Thawrī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Sufyãn ibn Sa‘īd ibn Masruq al-Kũfī (97/716 — 161/778), the famous traditionalist.
ath-Thumãlī — Abũ Ḥamzah, Thãbit ibn Dīnãr al-Azdī al-Kũfī (? — 150/ 767), the famous Imãmite traditionalist.
at-Tirmidhi — Abũ `Isa, Muhammad ibn `Īsã as-Sulami (209/824 — 279/ 892) , the famous Sunnī traditionalist.
aṭ-Ṭurayḥī — Fakhru 'd-Dīn ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali ibn Ṭurayḥ an-Najafī (979/1571—1087/1676), the great Imãmite scholar.
aṭ-Ṭũsī — *see* ash-Shaykh.

al-`Uqaylī — Abũ Ja'far, Muhammad ibn `Amr ibn Mũsã al-Makkī (? — 322/934), the Sunnī traditionalist.

al-Wãḥidī — Abu ’l-Ḥasan, `Ali ibn Aḥmad ibn Muhammad an-Naysãbũrī ash-Shãfi`ī (? — 468/1076), the Sunnī commentator.
Wakī‘ — Abũ Bakr, Muhammad ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyãn aḍ-Ḍabbī (? —

306/918), the Sunnī traditionalist.

Wakī‘ ibn al-Jarrãḥ — Abũ Sufyãn ar-Ru'ãsī al-Kũfī (129/746 — 197/812), the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

al-Wãqidī — Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn `Umar as-Sahmī al-Madanī (130/747 — 207/823), the famous historian.

Warrãm ibn Abī Firãs al-Ḥillī (? — 605/1208), the Imãmite scholar.

Warsh — `Uthmãn ibn Sa‘īd ibn `Adiyy al-Miṣrī (110/728 — 197/812), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Wãṣil ibn ‘Aṭã' — Abũ Ḥudhayfah al-Ghazzãl al-Baṣrī (80/699 — 131/748), the Mu‘tazilite Imãm.

Yaḥyã al-Baḥrãnī (?)

Yaḥyã ibn Sallãm ibn Abi Tha‘labah at-Taymī al-Baṣrī (124/742 — 200/815), the Sunnī commentator and traditionalist.

Ya`qũb ibn Isḥãq ibn Zayd — Abũ Muhammad al-Ḥaḍramī al-Baṣrī (117/ 735 — 205/821), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Ya`qũbī, Ibn Wãḍiḥ — Aḥmad ibn Isḥãq (? — a.d.292/905), the famous historian.

Yazīd ibn al-Qa`gã‘ — Abũ Ja'far al-Makhzũmī al-Madanī (? — 132/750), the famous reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

al-Yazīdī — Abũ Muhammad, Yaḥyã ibn al-Mubãrak ibn al-Mughīrah al-‘Adawī al-Baṣrī (138/755 — 202/818), the famous linguist and reciter of the Holy Qur’ãn.

Yũnus ibn `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn — Abũ Muhammad al-Yaqṭīnī al-Baghdãdī (c. 125/742 — 208/823-824), the famous Imãmite scholar and traditionalist.

az-Zajjãj — Abũ Isḥãq, Ibrãhīm ibn as-Sarī ibn Sahl al-Baghdãdī (241/855 - 311/923), the famous linguist.

az-Zajjaji — Abu ’l-Qãsim, `Abdu 'r-Raḥmãn ibn Isḥãq an-Nahãwandī (? - 337/949), the famous scholar.

az-Zamakhsharī — Abu ’l-Qãsim, Jãrullãh, Maḥmũd ibn `Umar ibn Muhammad al-Mu‘ tazilī al-Ḥanafī (467/1075 — 538/1144), the Sunnī scholar.

az-Zarkashī — Badru 'd-Dīn, Abũ `Abdillãh, Muhammad ibn Bahãdur ibn `Abdillãh al-Miṣrī ash-Shãfi`ī (745/1344 — 794/1392), the famous Sunnī scholar.

az-Zubayr ibn Bakkãr ibn `Abdillãh al-Qurashī az-Zubayrī (172/788 — 256/870) , the famous Sunnī historian.

Zurãrah ibn A‘yan — Abu ’l-Ḥasan ash-Shaybãnī al-Kũfī (c. 60/680 — 150/767), the celebrated Imãmite scholar and traditionalist.

az-Zurqãnī — `Abdu ' l-Bãqi ibn Yũsuf ibn Aḥmad al-Mãlikī (1020/1611 — 1099/1688), the famous Mãlikite scholar.

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APPENDIX `C'

WORKS REFERRED TO IN THIS VOLUME (OF *AL -MĪZÃN)* AND OTHER VOLUMES

NOTE: For reference to the full name of the authors and other information, see Appendix C.

Aḥkãmu 'I-Qur'ãn — Ibn al-`Arabī, al-Qãḍī, Abũ Bakr.
Aḥkãmu 'l-Qur'ãn — al-Jaṣṣãṣ.

al Akhlãq — Abu 'l-Qãsim al-`Alawī.

Alã 'u 'r-Raḥmãn (fi tafsīri 'l-Qur'ãn) — al-Balãghī.

al-Amãlī (al-Majãlis) — Ibnu 'sh-Shaykh.

al-Amãlī (al-Majãlis) — al-Mufīd.

al-Amãlī (al-Majãlis) — aṣ-Ṣadũq.

al-Amãlī (al-Majãlis) — ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī.

Amanu 'l-akhṭãr — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
Anwaru 't-tanzīl (wa asraru 't-ta'wīl) (Tafsīr) — al-Baydãwī.
Asbãbũ 'n-nuzũl — al-Wãḥidī.

al-Aṣfã (Tafsīr) — al-Fayḍ al-Kãshãni.
*al-Ash`athiyyãt* — Muhhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ash`ath.
al-Asma' wa 's-ṣifãt — al-Bayhaqī.
al-Ãthãru 'l-bãqiyah 'ani 'l-qurũni 'l- khãliyah) — al-Bīrũnī.
Ayãtu 'l-aḥkãm — al-Istarabãdī.

al-Baḥru 'l-muḥīt — Abũ Ḥayyãn al-Undulusī.

Baṣã'iru d-darajãt — aṣ-Ṣaffãr.

al-Bayãn (fi akhbãr ṣãḥibi 'z-zamãn) — al-Ganjī.

Biḥãru 'l-anwãr — al-Majlisī (II).
Bishãratu 'l-Muṣṭafã (li shi'ati 'l-Murtaḍã) — `Imãdu 'd-Dīn aṭ-Ṭabarī.
al-Burhãn (fī Tafsīri 'l-Qur'ãn) — al-Baḥrani.
Da`ã'imu 'l-Islãm — Abũ Ḥanīfah al-Miṣrī.
ad-Da`awãt (Sulwatu 'l-ḥazīn) — ar-Rãwandī.
Dalã'ilu 'n-nubuwwah — al-Bayhaqī.
Dhakha'iru 'l-`uqbã (fi manaqibi dhawi 'l-qurbã) — al-Muḥibb aṭ-Ṭabarī.
Dhakhīratu 'l-ma`ãd — al-Biṣṭãmī.
ad-Durru 'l-manthũr (fi tafsīri kitãbi 'llãhi 'l-ma'thũr) — aṣ-Ṣuyũṭī.

Faḍīlatu 'l-Ḥusayn — ?
Fara'idu 'ṣ-ṣimṭayn — al-Ḥammũyī.
Fatḥu 'l-qadīr — ash-Shawkanī.
Fiqhu 'l-Qur'ãn — ar-Rãwandī.
al-Fuṣũlu 'l-muhimmah (if manãqibi 'l-a'immah) — Ibnu 'ṣ-Ṣabbãgh.

al-Ghadīr — al-Amīnī.
Gharã'ibu 'l-Qur'ãn (Tafsīr) — an-Naysãbũrī, *al-*A'raj.
al-Ghãrãt — Abũ Isḥãq ath-Thaqafī.
Ghawãliyu 'l-la'ãlī— Ibn Abi Jumhũr.
Ghãyãtu 'l-marãm — al-Baḥrãnī.
al-Ghaybah — an-Nu`mãnī.
al-Ghaybah — ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī.
Ghuraru 'l-ḥikam (wa duraru 'l-kalim) — al-Ãmidī.

Ḥilyatu 'l-awliyã' — Abũ Nu'aym al-Iṣfahãnī.
al-Hudã ilã dīni 'l-Muṣṭafã — al-Balãghī.

al-Iḥtijãj — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abũ Manṣũr.
al-Iḥyã' (Iḥya' 'ulumu d-Dīn) — al-Ghazãlī, Abũ Ḥãmid.
al-Ikhtiṣãṣ — al-Mufīd.
`Ilalu 'sh-sharã'i' — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
I`lamu 'l-warã (bi a`lãmi 'l-hudã) — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abũ `Ali.
al-Igbal — Ibn Tawas, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
al-Irshãd — al-Mufīd.
Irshãdu 'l-qulũb — ad-Daylamī, Abũ Muhammad.
*al-Istī`ãb (fi ma'rifati 'l-asḥãb)* — Ibn `Abdi'l-Bãrr.
al-Istibṣãr (fī-mã khtalafa mina 'l-akhbãr) — ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī.
Ithbãtu 'l-waṣiyyah — al-Mas'ũdī.

al-Itqãn (fi `ulũmi 'l-Qur’ãn) — as-Suyũṭī.

al -Ja`fariyyãt* (see *al-Ash`athiyyãt) .
Jamãlu 'l-usbũ‘ — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
al-Jãmi` li aḥkãmi 'l-Qur’ãn — al-Qurṭubi.
*Jãmi`u l-uṣũl* — Ibnu 'l-Athīr, Abũ 's-Sa`ãdãt.
al-Jãmi'u ṣ-ṣaghīr — as-Suyũṭī.
Jam`u 'l-jawãmi` — as-Ṣuyũṭī.
al-Jawãhir (Tafsīr) — Ṭanṭãwī ibn Jawharī.
Jawãmi`u 'l-jãmi` — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abũ `Ali.

al-Kãfī — al-Kulaynī.
Kamãlu 'd-Dīn (wa tamãmu 'n-ni‘mah) — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
al-Kãmil (fi 't-tãrīkh) — Ibnu 'l-Athīr, Abu ’l-Ḥasan.
Kãmilu 'z-ziyãrah — Ibn Qũlawayh.
Kanzu 'l-fawã’id — al-Karãjikī.
Kanzu 'l- `irfãn (fī fighi 'l-Qur’ãn) — al-Fãḍil al-Miqdãd.
Kanzu 'l- `ummãl (fī sunani 'l-aqwali wa 'l-af`ãl) — al-Muttaqī al-Hindī.
Kashfu 'l-ghummah (fī ma‘rifat 'l-a'immah) — al-Irbilī.
Kashfu 'l-maḥajjah (li thamarati 'l-muhjah) — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
al-Kashshãf — az-Zamakhsharī.
al-Kharã'ij wa 'l-jarã'iḥ — ar-Rãwandi.
al-Khasã'isu 'l-`alawiyyah — an-Nasã'ī.
al-Khiṣãl — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
Kifayatu 'ṭ-ṭãlib (fī manaqib Ali ibn Abī Ṭãlib) — al-Ganjī.

Lisãnu 'l-‘Arab — Ibn Manẓũr.
Lubãbu 't-ta'wīl (fi ma`ani 't-tanzīl) — al-Khãzin.
Lubbu 'l-lubãb — ar-Rãwandī.

Ma`ãni 'l-akhbãr — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
Madãriku 't-tanzīl — an-Nasafī, Abu ’l-Barakãt.
al-Maḥajjatu 'l-bayḍã' (fī īḥã’I 'l-iḥyã') — al-Fayḍ al-Kãshãnī.
al-Maḥãsin (wa 'l-ãdãb) — al-Barqi.
Majma‘u 'l-baḥrayn — aṭ-Ṭurayḥī.
Majma‘u 'l-bayãn — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abũ `Ali.
Majma‘u ‘z-zawã’id (wa manba‘u 'l-fawã'id) — al-Haythamī, Nũru 'd-Dīn.
Majmũ`at Warrãm (Nuzhatu 'n-nãẓir wa tanbīhu 'l-khãṭir) — Warrãm ibn

Abi Firãs.
Makãrimu 'l-akhlãq — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abũ Naṣr.
al-Manãqib — al-Khaṭīb al-Khwãrazmī.
Manãqib Ali ibn Abī Ṭãlib — Ibn al-Maghãzilī.
al-Manãqib (Manaqib ãl Abī Ṭãlib) — Ibn Shahrãshũb.
al-Manãr (Tafsīr) — ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abduh and Rãshid Riḍã.
Manhaju 'ṣ-ṣãdiqīn (Tafsīr) — al-Kãshãni.
Man lã yaḥḍuruhu 'l-faqīh (Faqīhu man lã yaḥḍuruhu 'l-faqīh) — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
al-Maṣãḥif — Ibn Ashtah.
Masãliku 'l-afhãm (fī ãyãti 'l-aḥkãm) — al-Fãḍil al-Jawãd.
Maṭãlibu 's-sa'ũl (fī manãqib ãli 'r-rasũl) — Ibn Ṭalḥah.
al-Mawã'iẓ (wa 'z-zawãjir) — al-'Askarī, Abũ Aḥmad.
Misbãḥu 'z-zã'ir — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
Mishkãtu 'l-anwãr — aṭ-Ṭabrisī, Abu 'l-Faḍl.
al-Mufradãt — ar-Rãghib.
Muḥkamu 'l-Qur'ãn wa mutashãbihahu — Ibn Shahrãshũb.
Muntakhab (Mukhtaṣar) baṣã'iri d-darajãt — Ḥasan ibn Sulaymãn.
Munyatu 'l-murīd — ash-Shahīd ath-Thãnī.
al-Muqni'ah — al-Mufīd.
al-Musnad — Abũ Dãwũd aṭ-Ṭayãlisī.
al-Musnad — Aḥmad (ibn Ḥanbal).
al-Mustadrak ('ala 's-saḥīḥayn) — al-Ḥãkim.
al-Muwaṭṭa' — Mãlik ibn Anas.

Nahju 'l-balãghah — ar-Raḍī (ash-Sharīf).
Nahju 'l-Bayãn ('an kashfi ma`ãni 'l-Qur'ãn) — Muhammad ibn al-Ḥasan ash-Shaybãnī.
an-Nãsikh wa 'l-mansũkh — an-Naḥḥãs.
an-Nawãdir — Aḥmad ibn Muhammad ibn `Isã.
an-Nawãdir — ar-Rãwandī.
an-Nihãyah (fī gharībi 'l-ḥadīh) — Ibnu 'l-Athīr, Abũ 's-Sa`ãdãt.
an-Nubuwwah — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
Nuru 'l-abṣãr (fī manãqib ahli 'l-bayti 'l-aṭhãr) — ash-Shiblanjī.
Nũru 'th-Thaqalayn — al-`Arũsī.

Qalãidu 'd-durar — al-Jazã'irī.
al-Qãmũsu 'l-muḥīṭ — al-Fīrũzãbãdi.

Qiṣaṣu 'l-anbiyã' — ar-Rãwandi.
Qiṣaṣu 'l-anbiya' (‘Arãisu 'l-majãlis) — ath-Tha‘labi.
Qurbu 'l-isnãd — al-Ḥimyari.

Rawḍãtu 'l-Kãfī — see *al-Kãfī.*
Rawḍatu 'l-wã`iẓīn — al-Fattãl.
Rawḥu 'l-jinãn wa ruḥu 'l-janãn (Tafsīr) — Abu ’l-Futũḥ ar-Rãzī.
Ruḥu 'l-Bayãn — al-Burũsawī.
Ruḥu 'l-ma`ãnī — al-Ãlũsī.

Sa‘adu 's-su`ũd — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
aṣ-Sãfi (Tafsīr) — al-Fayḍ al-Kãshãni.
aṣ-Ṣahīfah as-Sajjadiyyah — al-Imãm Zaynu 'l-`Abidīn (a.s.).
aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ — see *as-Sunan* — at-Tirmidhī.
aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ — al-Bukhãrī.
aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ (al-Jãmi‘u 'ṣ-ṣaḥīḥ) — Muslim.
as-Sarã'ir — Ibn Idrīs.
ash-Shãfī — al-Murtaḍã (ash-Sharīf).
Shawãhidu 't-tanzīl (li qawã‘idi 't-tna'wīl) — al-Ḥãkim al-Ḥasakãnī.
ash-Shihãb (Shihãbu 'l-akhbãr) — al-Quḍã'ī.
ash-Shihãb (fi 'l-ḥikami wa 'l-ãdãb) — Yaḥyã al-Baḥrãnī.
Shu‘abu ’l- Īmãn — al-Bayhaqī.
aṣ-Siḥãḥ — al-Jawharī.
as-Sīrah (an-Nabawiyyah) — Ibn Hishãm.
aṣ-Ṣirãṭu 'l-mustaqīm (ilã mustaḥiqqi 't-taqdīm) — al-Bayãḍī.
as-Sunan — Abũ Dãwũd.
as-Sunan (al-kubrã) — al-Bayhaqī.
as-Sunan — ad-Dãrimī.
as-Sunan — ad-Dãr-quṭnī.
as-Sunan — Ibn Mãjah.
as-Sunan (al-Mujtanã) — an-Nasã'ī.
as-Sunan (al-Jãmi‘u 'ṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ) — at-Tirmidhī.

at-Tabaqãt (al-Kabīr) — Ibn Sa`d.
Tadhkirat Khawãṣi 'l-`ummah (bi dhikri manãqibi 'l-a'immah) — Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī.
at-Tafsīr — al-`Ayyãshī.

at-Tafsīr — Furãt ibn Ibrãhīm.
at-Tafsīr — Ibn Kathīr.
at-Tafsīr — an-Nu`mãnī.
at-Tafsīr — al-Qummī.
at-Tahdhīb = Tahdhību 'l-aḥkãm — ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī.
Tãju 'l `arũs (fī sharḥi 'l-qãmũs) — al-Murtaḍã az-Zabīdī.
Talkhiṣu 'sh-shãfī — ash-Shaykh aṭ-Ṭũsī.
aṭ-Ṭarã'if — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.
at-Targhīb (wa 't-tarhīb) — al-Iṣfahãnī at-Taymī.
at-Targhīb (wa 't-tarhīb) — al-Mundhirī.
at-Ta`rīf — aṣ-Ṣafwãnī.
at-Tãrīkh (al-Bidãyah wa 'n-nihãyah) — Ibn Kathīr.
at-Tawḥīd — aṣ-Ṣadũq.
Ta'wīlu 'l-ãyãti 'l-bãhirah (aẓ-ẓãhirah) (fi 'l-'itrati 'ṭ-ṭãhirah) — Sharafu 'd-Dīn al-Istarabãdī.
Ṭibbu 'l-a'immah — `Abdullãh and al-Ḥusayn ibn Bisṭãm ibn Sãbũr az-Zayyãt. *at-Tibyãn (fī Tafsīri 'l-Qur'ãn)* — ash-Shaykh at-Tũsī.
Tuḥafu 'l- `uqũl — Ibn Shu'bah.

al- `Udadu 'l-qawiyyah — Ibnu 'l-Muṭahhar.
`Uddatu d-dã'ī — Ibn Fahd.
al-Umm — ash-Shãfi`ī.
Usdu 'l-ghãbah (fī ma'rifati 'ṣ-ṣaḥãbah) — Ibnu 'l-Athīr, Abu 'l-Ḥassan.
`Uyũnu 'l-akhbãr (`Uyunu akhbãri 'r-Riḍã(a.s).) — aṣ-Ṣadũq.

al-Wãfī — al-Fayḍ al-Kãshãnī.

Yanãbī`u 'l-mawaddah — al-Qundũzī.
al-Yaqīn (fī imrati Amīri 'l-mu'minīn) — Ibn Ṭãwũs, Raḍiyyu 'd-Dīn.

Zãdu 'l-ma`ãd — Ibnu 'l-Qayyim.
Zawã'idu 'l-musnad — `Abdullãh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.
Zubdatu 'l-Bayãn (fi aḥkãmi 'l-Qur'ãn) — al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ardabīlī.
az-Zuhd — al-Ḥusayn ibn Sa'īd.
Zuhdu 'n-nabī — Ibnu 'r-Rãzī

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